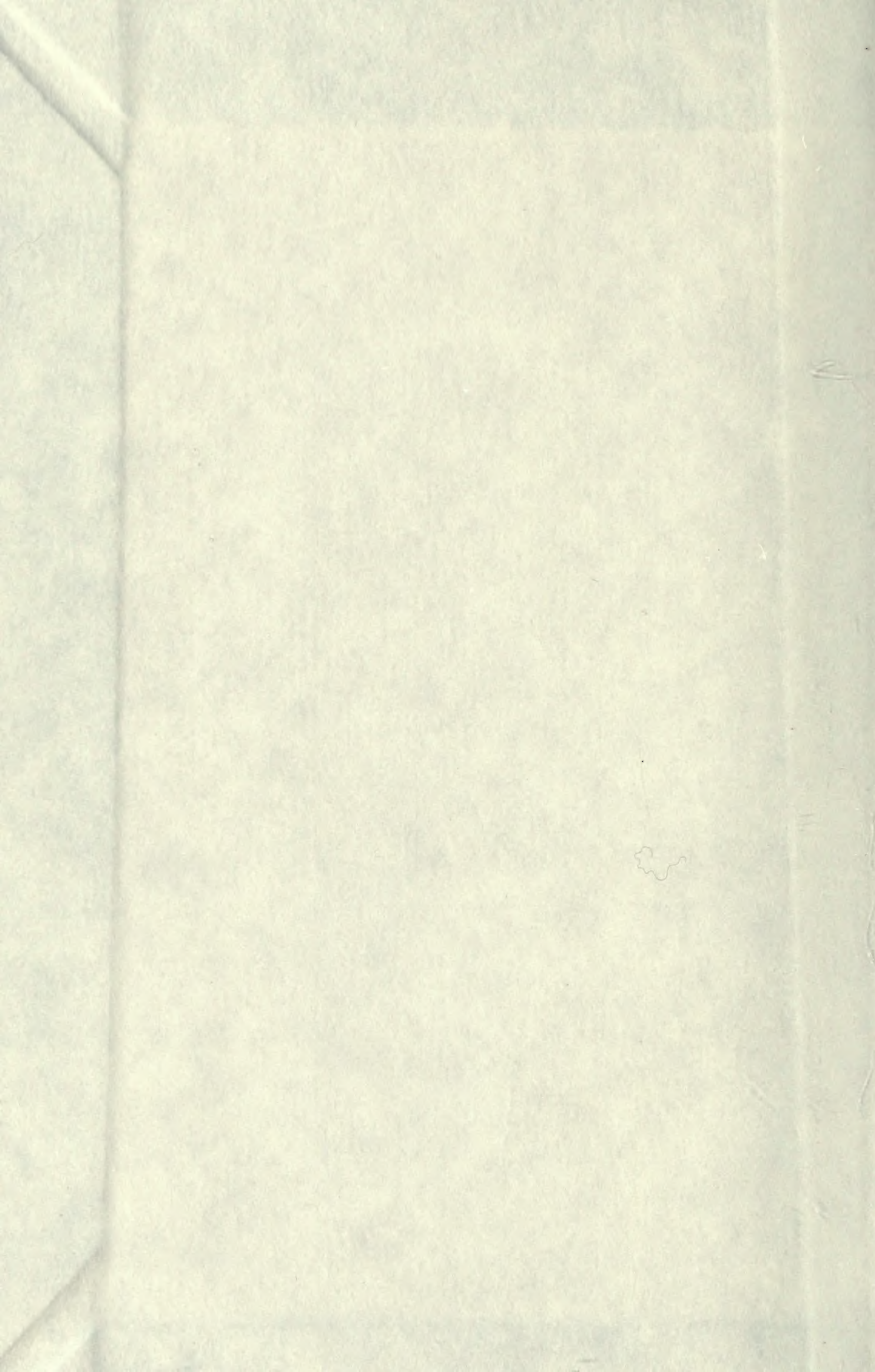


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IN TUSCANY

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*Photograph by*

*ALINARI, Florence*

SANTA MARIA DELLE TOSSE, BY MATTEO CIVITALI

*Frontispiece*

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# IN TUSCANY

TUSCAN TOWNS, TUSCAN TYPES  
AND THE TUSCAN TONGUE

BY

MONTGOMERY CARMICHAEL



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—  
25/8/01

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1901



*“Cara e beata e benedetta Toscana, patria  
d’ogni eleganza e d’ogni gentil costume, e  
sede eterna di civiltà.”—LEOPARDI*



TO

*MY SISTER MARY*

THE WRITER OF SONGS



## PREFATORY NOTE

THIS book has been written after long residence among the Tuscans, but no attempt has been made in it to describe the whole of Tuscany. I have endeavoured rather to illustrate some of the little-known but fascinating spots of that most fascinating country, and have attempted by an estimate of the Tuscan character, by numerous sketches of Tuscan types, by a disquisition on the spoken language, and by a description of the characteristic highways and byways of the country, to present to the reader a truthful impression of Tuscany and the Tuscans in general.

The book has but one merit that I dare hazard: I have succeeded in writing of this chosen corner of the Earth without any mention of cities so over-written and over-run as Florence and Siena. The reader who knows Tuscany, even slightly, will be properly grateful for this relief.

Of the five cities described, Leghorn, Volterra,



and Portoferraio are unfamiliar to the majority of Englishmen, and Lucca is but little better known. At Pisa I have almost passed over the famous Duomo, Campo Santo and Leaning Tower, and tell instead of the camels which have been indigenous there for more than two centuries, of the ancient mediæval port of the Pisan Republic, of the Church and Order of the Knights of St. Stephen, and of the wonderful *Madonna di sotto gli Organi* which is locked up in the Cathedral, away from the eye of the passing traveller.

The other places described are the veritable byways of Tuscany, and they are perhaps more fascinating than its highways. These chapters include Mount La Verna, where St. Francis in 1224 received the Stigmata, and where there is to-day a flourishing convent of the Friars Minor; Camaldoli, with its monastery and hermitage, and its great hotel, now a favourite summer resort of the Tuscans; Montecatini, the gay inland watering-place, the Tunbridge of Tuscany; and the old State of the Spanish Præsidia in the Province of Grosseto, with its wonderful Spanish fortresses and keeps.

The Italian national game of "Pallone" is

fully dealt with, and the book closes with an account of the mysteries of the Italian State Lottery, how people may win in it and how lose, what the State makes out of it, and to what extent it is patronised by the people.

The illustrations I have chosen are for the most part representations of little-known views and works of art. The Coats of Arms of Cities and Religious Orders are the work of Mr. Michael Carr.

Some of the chapters of this book have already appeared in the form of Magazine and Review articles: and I beg to express my thanks to the proprietors of *Temple Bar*, the *Saturday Review*, the *National Observer*, the *Pall Mall Magazine*, *Pearson's Monthly*, and *St. Peter's Magazine* for the courteous permission they have kindly accorded me to make use of subject-matter which had first seen the light in their pages.

M. C.





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# THE TUSCAN TEMPERAMENT



# IN TUSCANY

## THE TUSCAN TEMPERAMENT

(A FRANKLY PARTISAN APPRECIATION)

"I do not profess to understand the Italians," says Mr. Grant Allen somewhere,<sup>1</sup> "they are at once too simple and too complex."

And in no part of Italy are the Italians at once so simple and so complex as in Tuscany. The Tuscan is so easily taken in and so difficult to get round ; so meek of heart and so prone to wrath ; so contented and so easily stirred to revolt and discontent ; so rootedly old-world and so painfully modern ; so common-sense, yet so easily deceived by big words and bogus ideals ; so enamoured of liberty, yet so patient under galling slavery ; so free and easy in church, yet so essentially devout ; so truthful, so mendacious ; so superstitious, so enlightened ; so honest, such a cheat ; so thrifty, such a spendthrift ; so re-

<sup>1</sup> I regret that I cannot remember where, and that I can only vouch for the substance, not for the verbal accuracy of the quotation.

spectable, so disreputable—in a word, so simple and so complex, so good and so bad.

The Englishman who settles in Tuscany becomes conscious first of all rather of the complexities of the Tuscan character than of its essential simplicity. Life, so different from life at home, develops daily in complications and contrasts. The commonest people are casuists, metaphysicians, diplomatists, keen observers of human nature, instinctive judges of human character. Of every man they form a lively and highly-wrought estimate, a character sketch in all its details, but no man do they sum up with such avidity and relish as the foreigner. He is no ordinary child of Adam, but a new and bizarre creation, needing the full exercise of their quick wits. Twenty times as much thought is bestowed upon him, for twenty times as much is expected of him. Woe to the luckless foreigner if the judgment be adverse, if he be stigmatised as "*superbo*" and "*prepotente*" and "*egoista*" and "*poco educato*," for he will lie upon a bed of thorns; happy the foreigner if he gain popular approval, if he be "*gentile*" and "*distinto*" and "*affabile con tutti*" and a "*vero gentiluomo*," for he will lie upon a bed of roses. There is no limit to the small subtle discomforts—and all so imperceptibly, so cunningly administered—that the fertile wits of this people can devise for whoso meets its disapproval; just as there



is no limit to the small kindly acts—and all done without the shadow of ostentation or the desire of reward—which are showered upon him who has been judged with popular favour.

It is at least some satisfaction to live in a country where the happiness and general comfort of the sojourner depend to a great extent upon his merits. It puts a man on his mettle; he stifles his predatory instincts; he seeks to acquire by diplomacy rather than by force; he aims at making a goodly show of bonhomie and generosity—with all, and at all times, he strives to put on that cheery Tuscan courtesy which so effectually soothes and reassures. It is much if you can do all this, and your success would be assured if all Tuscans were alike, if they were all but as simple as they seemed. You have dealings with a man of sinister Mephistophelean countenance; you suspect him, mistrust him, finally accuse him; he proves, on examination, to be as upright as Aristides, and you confess that you are misjudging the Tuscans. Then you have dealings with a very fascinating person, open, merry of countenance, childlike in his bearing and speech, childlike in his ideas. How welcome is the sincere cheery ring of his voice, how invigorating the echo of his honest laughter! You love him, trust him, place him in authority; he robs and cheats you, and once more you amend your estimate of the Tuscan

temperament. And all this while, be it remembered, the unlucky foreigner is striving to acquire a tongue as difficult and complex, as rich in contrasts and perplexities, as the Tuscan temperament itself, the want of which leaves him the poor plaything of the meanest hind in his service, the perfect acquisition of which makes him, if he be Saxon, Teuton, or Scandinavian, no real match for a race of born probabilists.

It is easy to pick holes in the Tuscan character; it is pleasanter far, if far more difficult, to speak of its many surpassing excellencies. The foreigner—if he shall have proved himself to be unobjectionable—finds, to his astonishment, that the Tuscans are like people as he thought people were when he was a child, like people as the big masters of fiction paint them, with much heart, constant consideration for others, great delicacy of sentiment, and an ample measure of the bowels of compassion. The old servant of fiction, for instance, still lives in Tuscany—the man who seems to be getting no wage for he is a member of the family, who seeks no advantage, no rest, no recompense, who utters no complaint except to accuse himself of imperfect service. And the beggar of fiction survives—the creature to whom it is pleasant and fitting to give, and so does the giver of fiction who weighs not merits in any nicely-adjusted balance. Here, too, are the monks and nuns and men-at-arms of chivalrous

fiction in whom we find no guile. There are still Brothers Cheeryble among Tuscan merchants, Uncle Tobys among Tuscan pensioners, Monseigneur Myriels in the Tuscan Episcopate, all capable of romantic leaps in the dark ; and among the rejected and despised of the world, unsuspected, undiscovered, in the slums, in peasant hovels, in unknown, unsung monasteries and convents, the rare figure of the old-time Saint, living in the atmosphere and dying in the odour of sanctity.

It is all very charming when you come to know it, but it takes a deal of knowing, and in the course of coming to know a thousand disenchantments lower upon the path. The foreigner's first year—as likely as not through his own fault—is almost certain to be passed in discomfort and disquiet. He comes there prejudiced to begin with ; he vaunts his prejudices, or has no care to conceal them ; popular opinion condemns him, and then the process of slow torture begins. The Englishman, in everyday life, is ordinarily very passive towards people. He should know that this people require to be actively managed, that their interest in him is profound, that their eyes are upon him taking his every measurement, that his conduct and manners are being ruthlessly overhauled, and that his judges are great sticklers for externals. A certain Royal Highness, one of the most exalted princesses of

Europe, once came among them travelling in transparent incognito. She descended from her yacht and drove through the little town out into the wild free country. And here she was seen by a handful of peasants to descend from her carriage and to run, if not to skip, nay, there was one who said that she had even jumped! Conduct so light and unbecoming a Royal Princess immediately became the talk of this commune of four thousand peasants. There were but two opinions—that of the contemptuous minority that she was no real Princess; that of the offended majority, that by this levity of demeanour she had meant to convey that they, the people, were too uncivilised to call for the decorum expected of Royalty. Poor dear lady, out for a holiday jaunt in the wilds of Tuscany, free for once to cast off the tedium of Royal state, little did she dream that critical eyes were upon her expecting perfection and finding only grave imperfection, that she was among peasants who in many respects require for themselves all the ceremony due to the weary denizens of courts!

I sometimes doubt if Tuscan professions of love for the foreigner can really be genuine. How would it be possible, one may well ask, for the Tuscan to love appetitively a Norseman, a Hollander, or a Pomeranian? But professions of affection are most profuse where the English-



man is concerned, even though we may doubt whether such professions do not spring—at least in the first instance—rather from a sense of duty and gratitude than from pure inclination. For in some dim way the Tuscan believes that Englishmen contributed vitally to that Union of Italy which he believes, still more dimly, has in some way contributed to his good. Then the Englishman is rich, he is dense and unsuspecting, often he is good-natured, usually he is mad enough to pay more than is due, and he is a member of that race which, in deference to the greatness of Italy, has joined the quadruple alliance against the proud and hated French. Certainly the Tuscan has some real love of the Englishman. He finds him defective in manners, a trifle overbearing and a trifle *parvenu*, too credulous of the upper classes and too sceptic of the lower, deficient in the right handling of delicate questions of conduct, unable to appreciate at their due value the myriad gradations of right and wrong. The Tuscans are proud: Italy led the world when England was a second-class power, Italy was mistress of all arts, the capital of Italy was ever the capital of the world. Tuscans descend from Etruscans and Romans, English from savage hordes on the Baltic. And Italy sent Christianity to England. Decidedly the Tuscan thinks himself superior to the Englishman in a degree that quite outdoes

the Englishman's belief in his superiority to the Tuscan, and, moreover, he measures with an entirely different measure. But, as I said, the Tuscan has certainly some real affection for the Englishman ; he loves his honesty, he admires his generosity, he reveres his pluck, he gapes in wonder at his plain dealing, and when he comes across his ideal Englishman (who as often as not turns out to be an Irishman) there is no limit to his whole-hearted enthusiastic love and admiration.

The travelling Englishman, ignorant of its language, who visits a foreign country for a mere holiday jaunt is not in a position to judge of the character of its people. The travelling Englishman's opinion of the Tuscans is usually ludicrously beside the mark : to him all the Latin races are knaves and thieves and cheats. But the resident Englishman usually succumbs entirely to the charms of the Tuscan character, and loves even more than he is beloved. It is surprising what a number of English people live permanently in Tuscany, not quitting it even for an annual holiday, but going instead, like any good Florentine, to the Tuscan mountains or the Tuscan seaside. An Englishman, say a retired civil servant, comes with his family for a stay of six months to "see" Florence. He arrives charged to the brim with captiousness, prepared not to submit to six months of dirt, and discomfort, and impossible fare, and wholesale robbery, without

constant, aggressive, and loud-voiced protest. He finds instead, though the fact is slow to penetrate his intelligence, willing service, cheap living, wholesome food, sound wine, scrupulous cleanliness, a cheery welcome, and honesty closely allied to honour. His doom is sealed, and though he does not yield without a struggle, his native land knows him and his daughters no more.

It is the lower classes, the peasant class and even the working class of the towns, who supply the great charm of life in Tuscany. And this charm in the main proceeds from their inborn good manners, from that sunny, cheery courtesy which never seems to be mere external ceremony, but springs straight from the heart itself. Only the other day I was striving in a network of slums to find a given slum. In despair I entered a vile enough looking drinking-shop to inquire my way. There were but two customers inside, discussing with the host a highly sweetened non-intoxicant syrup made from the red-currant, and known as *Ribes*.

"*Cosa comanda?*" inquired mine host, which was as much as to say, "What may you be pleased to drink?"

I ought to have drunk something, I know; decency required it of me; but the stomach turns coward at the thought of sweet syrup in the slums. I bowed instead ceremoniously, and inquired the way to the Via della Rosa Bianca.

Mine host scratched his head and looked distressed. "It is still far from here," he said, "and the street is difficult to find." He mused awhile, still in obvious distress, and then his face suddenly brightened. "Go thou, Alfredo," he said, turning to one of his two customers, "and show this gentleman the way to the Via della Rosa Bianca."

Alfredo leapt to his feet, bowed, excused himself, drank off his sickly syrup, and stood ready to accompany me. But a troubled expression came across his face also. "And yet," he said ruminatively, "I am not certain whether the third to the left would bring us there, or——"

"Nay, certainly not the third to the left——" interrupted the other tippler.

"Then if thou knowest, go thou likewise, Arturo!" cried the host, addressing his only other customer.

Arturo too leapt to his feet, bowed, excused himself, drank off his drink, and accompanied by Alfredo and Arturo (sort of waterside characters, I should think) I found my destination. Thus did the landlord of a low Tuscan *bettola* forcibly eject his only customers (who would certainly have drunk at least another *siroppo* each) from the mere love of serving a person in need of help. This is the real character of Tuscan courtesy; there may be much ritual, much smiling, bowing, throwing about of arms, and ceremonial phrase; but the essence of each



courteous act springs from that old-fashioned Christian charity which suffereth long and is kind, and which, owing to bushels of precept and centuries of practice, still burns cheerily in the land of St. Francis and St. Antoninus.

It is perhaps scarcely fair to say anything of the Tuscans politically. They are new to modern politics, and time has as yet had no chance of leavening the political lump. Though they make a great show of being devoted to modern political ideas, the observer is inclined to think that the leaven is unsuited to such fine flour. And the observer cannot help regretting a little that aggressive modernity which, in conversation, so often seems to imply that Italy had no history to be proud of before 1859, or, at the very remotest, 1848. The average Italian urgently requires to study more dispassionately the great past of Italy, and needs very different preceptors in history from the text-books now current in the Peninsula. To reconcile past and present: that is the great problem, on the solution of which depends the future happiness of the country; the solution is hindered and not advanced by ignoring and maltreating the past.

It is perhaps a curious circumstance, and certainly an interesting fact politically, that although Tuscany was the best governed of all Italy's separate States, yet never a soul is found to advocate the restoration of the old order. *Si*

*stava meglio quando si stava peggio*—we were better off when we were worse off; this popular saying is the only retrospective expression one ever hears, and it has no reference to dynasty, but only to material well-being. Tuscany under the recent Grand Dukes seems to have been a kind of earthly paradise: £50 a year was a competency, and £100 a year a fortune; taxes were almost nil, trade thriving, living cheap, wine so abundant that the peasant women used to bathe their children in it, and personal liberty greater than in the present day. You could do almost anything you liked in old Tuscany except preach revolution, practise rebellion, and propagate heresy. Yet—unlike Naples, the worst governed of the States—not a shred of a Legitimist party exists in Tuscany, and the King of Italy has no more devoted subjects than the Tuscans, not even among his native Piedmontese. One will find more people in one small city of the old Sardinian kingdom in favour of the restitution of the Temporal Power, than in the whole of the country of papal St. Catherine of Siena. This is but one of those characteristic contradictions and surprises with which the complex Tuscan temperament is for ever plaguing the distracted observer.

And talking of the Temporal Power leads one naturally to the subject of religion. The Tuscan temperament—if it is ever safe to give it any single simple attribute—is essentially devout, but

many of the Tuscans are no longer religious. Although one would expect from many other indications that a Tuscan would always be at extremes, yet practical propagandist infidelity is a negligible quantity existing only in artisan clubs and freemason lodges ; while indifference pure and simple is rife and rampant, extending nowadays even to the womenkind of the bourgeois classes. I think it was Pius IX. who said there were no Frenchmen in Purgatory, that they were all either in Paradise or the Inferno. Purgatory, I should say, must be full of Tuscans. Extreme in their politics, extreme in their passions, in their loves and hates and jealousies, they content themselves with the minimum in religion when they do not neglect it altogether. Of course so simple a statement about so complex a people needs modification. There are whole classes of men in Tuscany sincerely and enthusiastically religious. The old-fashioned aristocrat is religious, and so is the hard-worked peasant ; it would be impossible to find a body of more sincerely religious men than the Tuscan clergy, both secular and regular. And really when the observer has quite made up his mind that religious indifferentism is rife in the towns, a visit to one of the large churches, where a vast crowd is listening in rapt attention to a sermon an hour long and at the close complaining of its brevity, immediately disturbs his previous judgment, and he begins to think that

there must be after all a great deal of religion in Tuscan towns. One thing at least is certain, that the Tuscan temperament is eminently susceptible of being worked upon by religion, that it is capable of rising to a revival movement, and that there are not wanting signs that this revival has already begun.

With all his faults, in spite of all the difficulty we have in comprehending his character, in spite of contradictions, complexities, and crudities, the Tuscan is perhaps the most charming of all the children of Adam, just as his country, in spite of all its drawbacks, in spite of fierce heat, damp, scirocco, tramontana, mosquitoes, and all the plagues of a vexatious bureaucracy, is more nearly like the Promised Land than any other. But to live in that enchanted land and dwell among its siren people, needs an apprenticeship not easy to serve, and many a Philistine from beyond Jordan cancels his articles early in the apprenticeship and flees the country in affright or disgust. It is often only after years of hard service, constant uneasiness, and continual perplexity that the stranger sojourning in the land awakens one day to find that he is dwelling in Eden, and sees on all sides of him, living in the flesh and working in the spirit, characters and ideals which had dimly figured among the dreams he dreamt in the far-off days of his generous, romantic boyhood.

# TUSCAN TYPES







ARMS OF THE ORDER OF FRIARS MINOR

# I

## FRA PACIFICO

JUST as I opened the hall-door to go out into the street, the house bell rang out apologetically.

The doorway was darkened by a figure whom I had no sort of wish to encounter, of whom I had perhaps a sort of vague fear and dislike. But I could not now withdraw. This kind of figure had become very familiar to me in Tuscan streets; all my life long had I been familiar with it in the world's heritage of religious pictures. But I had never exchanged a word with such a figure, nor had I hitherto heard the sound of human speech come across the lips of any one of them.

It was a Franciscan friar who humbly darkened my door, and he had come to ask an alms. As I stood gazing at him curiously, it seemed to me,

by one of those psychological freaks which visit us all at times, that I had enacted this scene in another existence. But I was wrong. Reason and memory came to my aid. It was not I who had enacted this scene in another life, but Laurence Sterne who had enacted it in this, and he has described it for all time in the "Sentimental Journey." Blessed be Laurence Sterne, who, having sinned the sin of discourtesy against the most courteous of all mankind, has, by the moving confession of his crime, made it impossible that any gentleman should ever again treat a Religious with discourtesy! Leastways, he saved me from the sin that day.

Pacifico was this friar's name, and "Fra" his designation. He was no priest or father, but a simple lay-brother of the Franciscan *Riformati*.<sup>1</sup> His habit was of a coarse brown stuff, faded and threadbare; a knotted cord was girded round his waist; his sandalled feet were covered with the

<sup>1</sup> Alas! (the "alas!" is but a sigh of human and historic regret, not a murmur against the exercise of Apostolic authority)—alas! there are no longer any *Riformati*. The wise Constitution "Felicitate quadam" of Leo XIII., under date the 4th October 1897, has reduced the six Franciscan families to three, has joined the *Osservanti* of all the world, the *Riformati* of Italy, the *Alcantarini* of Spain, and the *Cordeliers* or *Recollets* of France, into one body, under the glorious and primitive style and title of "the Friars Minor." We have, therefore, now only three Franciscan families—the Friars Minor, the Conventuals, and the Capuchins. The Friars Minor wear a deep brown dyed habit, and are discalced; the Conventuals wear black, and are shod and unshaven; the Capuchins have an undyed brown habit, are barefoot, and wear beards. I ask pardon of the instructed for these very

fine white dust of a Tuscan high-road: at my appearance he had lifted the small brown skull-cap, which was his sole protection against the hot April sun, and stood there, twisting it apologetically between his fingers. The more I looked at him, the more did I wander back in fancy to the room in Dessein's hotel at Calais, where Yorick met with Father Lorenzo. Here was the same "attitude of entreaty," the same "thin spare form," the same "mild, pale, penetrating face," the same freedom from all "common-place ideas of fat, contented ignorance." And his face, too, "looked forwards, and looked as if it looked to something beyond this world."

The friar's embarrassment was great when he found the door thus suddenly opened upon him by the signore of the house, a manifest foreigner too.

"*Buon giorno, signoria,*" he began with a quaintly demure courtesy—"I demand a thousand pardons——"

elementary details, but a lengthy experience has shown me that many people, instructed in everything else, flounder when they come to touch a Religious Order. A young writer, who is at present delighting us all with his pictures of Italian life, and astounding us with his erudition, yet makes Capuchins walk down the streets of Verona one hundred and sixty-six years before they came into being, and in another place confides a youth to their education fifty-six years before the date of their foundation. The *Riformati* used to fasten their cloak with a clasp of wood and leather; they have now had to adopt the more expensive brass hook and eye of the Observantins. I have succeeded in securing Fra Pacifico's simple, well-worn wooden clasp, and I treasure it as a relic against the day of his canonisation.

His voice was very musical. I looked into the mild blue eyes, and liked him. Then I had never spoken to a friar, and there was about this friar, as about Father Lorenzo, so simple a grace, such an air of deprecation in the whole cast of his look and figure, that I should have been bewitched had I sent him empty away.

"*Passi*," I said instead ; "come in, won't you?"

Fra Pacifico held back diffidently, and his eyes lit up with a childlike wonder.

"I had but called to ask an alms of your charity," he answered.

"*Passi, passi, prego!*—let me entreat you," I said, "to come in!"

I held the door open wider. The friar made me a low obeisance, and with a smile that acknowledged my powers of persuasion, entered the hall and stood expectant on the door-mat.

"In here," I went on as I pushed him before me ; "into my study."

"*O quanti libri!*—what a lot of books!" he cried, in unfeigned surprise. "It almost reminds me of what our convent library used to be!"

"Used to be?" I asked, mightily pleased at his praise of my books. "Have you then no library now?"

"Alas! no, signore, not above forty odd volumes or so. They took our books from us when we were suppressed, and put them into the



town library, where nobody, says the Father Guardian, ever looks at them, because they are all in Latin and treat of theology."

"But how can you have been 'suppressed' when you are still in existence?" I asked, laughing.

The friar laughed too. "We died," he answered, "and came to life again. They turned us out of our convent, and put it up to auction. Two pious gentlemen bought it and gave it back to us. But it is against the law now for a religious body to own property, so two of the fathers hold it in their own names as their own private and personal possession."

"Then if these two fathers turned traitor, they could evict you all and sell the convent!"

It was an inconsiderate remark, drawn from me by curiosity, surprise, and the study of law-books. Fra Pacifico shuddered slightly. "Almighty God will not permit so great a calamity!" he answered devoutly. Simple soul! I had meant to be so considerate, too, and avoid all Yorick's pitfalls, and yet here I was at the very outset, sowing new poisonous seeds in his mind that might bear all the bitter fruits of suspicion and distrust. Fortunately for me, they fell upon ground in which no rank or poisonous weeds would grow.

"But sit down!" I continued, for we had been standing all this time.

He was about to expostulate, Tuscan fashion, when his eye caught a picture on the wall, and in an instant he was before it with hands clasped in strong emotion. It was the death of St. Francis, by Ghirlandajo, a coloured representation of the Arundel Society.

When he had satisfied his hunger of gazing he turned to me, and his blue eyes were moist.

"The signore is a Christian,<sup>1</sup> then," he said, "that he has a picture of our holy founder?"

"Your holy founder," I answered a trifle sententiously; "if the product of one Church, if the founder of one Order, is the inheritance of the world and the beloved of all mankind."

Fra Pacifico opened his eyes wide in surprise. "Is he so great as all that?" he exclaimed; "so great that even the *Protestanti* love him! I had not known it. Alas! in my dear country, so changed from what it was, there are those who revile him and his children, as they revile the holy faith which he professed."

How musical his voice was, and how innocent, how captivating, his enthusiasm! I made him sit down, and I made him discuss a glass of vermouth, but an English biscuit, though it greatly excited his curiosity, he would in nowise touch, because it was the season of Lent.

My mind wandered as he talked courteous

<sup>1</sup> "Christian," in the common parlance of Tuscany, means "Catholic."

commonplaces to me, and I took instead to gazing at him and speculating about him. What was he before he put on that habit? What was the rank in life from which he sprung ere he had become transmuted by the magic wand of St. Francis? Was he of patrician family, or was he a peasant's son? Surely the son of prince or duke, if gentle manners are an index of noble birth. These were gentle manners certainly, but there was a quality in them that could not be ascribed to mere gentility of birth. It was a quality that might have been attained by prince or peasant, but not easily either by the one or the other. For want of a better word I must call it spirituality. And then a sudden explanation of it all rushed into my mind; this was a religious man, and I had never been face to face with such an one before.

"Is your convent far from here?" I asked presently.

"Some twelve miles or so along the coast."

"And do you come into the town often?"

"Every week or ten days, according to our necessities, for we live entirely by alms."

"But there is no train or other conveyance along the coast."

"I walk," replied Fra Pacifico simply. "If I start at four in the morning I am here by eight o'clock, and have the whole day before me to disturb (*incomodare*) the good and kind."

"And you breakfast on the way?"

Fra Pacifico shrugged his shoulders. "Breakfast is not a meal," he said, "but there are kind friends who give me breakfast in the town."

"Then you walk here without having eaten anything!" I cried. Fra Pacifico blushed when he saw that he had betrayed his act of mortification. "I hope," I resumed, "that you will sometimes do me the pleasure of breakfasting in this house."

The friar rose from his seat and made me a bow. "I shall indeed be honoured, signore," he replied.

"And may I come and pay you a visit at the convent? I shall drive, though, and not walk," I added, laughing.

Again the humble friar rose and bowed to me. "The Father Guardian will indeed be honoured to welcome you, signore," he said; "but our convent is a poor place, and we have neither pictures nor marbles to show. It is the infirmary of the Order. The old fathers who are past work go there to die; those who are sick come to seek health from the strong tonic breezes of the Tyrrhenian Sea."

"I will certainly come," I said, "and that very soon."

Fra Pacifico rose to go. I came to the front door with him and held it open for him. "Expect me very soon," I said. He smiled upon me, and bade me a polite adieu. Then



only did it occur to me. "Why, *santo cielo!*" I cried, "I am sending you empty away!"

Fra Pacifico only smiled again.

I produced my pocket-book and offered him three paper livres. He was covered with confusion, and I afterwards learnt that I had given ten or fifteen times as much as any friar would expect.

About ten days later Fra Pacifico called again, and left, with many messages for me, a mighty gift of vegetables grown upon the convent grounds — cardoons, tomatoes, endive, fennel stalks, and the appetising salad known as *barba de' Cappuccini*. Such a great quantity, surely, I could not have bought in the market-place for the dole I had given him in charity. My cook told me he always did his long walk into town laden in this way with a sack of vegetables as a thank-offering for those who had been kind to his convent. So difficult is it to do anything for nothing in Tuscany. Do but do a kind act, and the recipient of it straightway sets about seeking how he may repay you.

A fortnight afterwards, Fra Pacifico came to breakfast. I was still in bed and asleep. His breakfast was a cup of black, sugarless coffee, and a slice of dry bread. He would not sit down to it; he would take it nowhere but in the kitchen and off the bare deal table, and insisted afterwards on washing up his cup and platter. Perhaps this custom is enjoined by the

rule of his Order. Perhaps it is part of a private system of his own for attaining to the completest self-abnegation and humility. I do not know.

Fra Pacifico came to "breakfast," and again I did not see him. Again he brought me vegetables — dainty cardoons, sweet kidney-beans, and succulent artichokes. I gave orders that he was to have the bounteous alms of a livre a month. He left me many messages of thanks, many messages of goodwill, and the prayer that I would not forget my promised visit to the convent. And he left me too, at different times, ever such odd little prints of saints, and images, and miracle-pictures. One of them he desired that I would carry about me, and I might then look for every sort of blessing, both spiritual and temporal. It represents the holy father St. Francis, in a cave at wild La Verna where he received the stigmata, in the act of handing his famous triple-benediction to poor tempted Fra Leone. The benediction is written on a parchment which Fra Leone was to carry about him, and, in Italian, it runs as follows :—

*Il Signore ti benedica e ti custodisca :*

*Ti mostri la sua faccia e abbia misericordia di te :*

*Volga a te il suo sguardo e ti dia pace.<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> This is, of course, only a conventional representation of the original Benediction, of which a facsimile is given in the chapter on "La Verna."

Heaven forgive me! There is superstition in the very air of Tuscany; it penetrates the veins of the most complacent Pyrrhonist; it stirs the soul of the doughtiest Protestant; it puts to confusion even the most rabid anti-clerical. I do carry the picture about me, and no grave evil has befallen me since, true as it is that no grave evil ever befell me before, save once.

I go to bed late and lie abed late. Fra Pacifico came in the early morning at breakfast time, and so, wrapped in sloth, I never chanced to see him. Six months went by. Either it was hot, or it was wet, or it was windy, or I fancied myself mighty busy, or, truth to tell, not seeing him, his image and his influence grew faint; but certain it is I did not pay my visit to the convent.

Twelve months passed or more, and I suddenly became aware that I was no longer having cardoons for dinner. And then, why to be sure, that monthly *lira* was no longer figuring in my accounts, and it must be quite a long while since I received a new *santino*. Could the humble friar be offended because I had never paid my visit? That was impossible in one who had so perfectly moulded his soul to ancient Christian models. Like Father Lorenzo, Nature in him, too, had done with her resentments. Could he be ill then? I ordered round Beniamino, my

cabman, at once, and drove off to the convent, twelve miles along the hot, white, dusty coast-road.

The convent was no convent, but the poorest kind of house; the church beside it was barer than any conventicle. But there was a cross upon the top of the church, and there was a majolica Annunciation over the door of the house, and, if you looked narrowly enough, neither the one nor the other could have belonged to any but the poor sons of St. Francis; for above the stone porch of the garden gate you would have seen a rude discoloured fresco of a Cross of Calvary traversed by two human arms in saltire, one in bend naked, representing the arm of Our Lord, the other in bend sinister, clothed in the habit of St. Francis, both bearing the stigmata.<sup>1</sup> I knocked at the door. It was opened by the cheeriest of lay-brothers. His face beamed like the sun at morning, and his eyes twinkled upon me as if my advent had given him the one pleasure in life he most of all desired.

"Is Fra Pacifico in?" I asked.

Then that beaming face grew all of a sudden woefully chapfallen; those twinkling eyes started

<sup>1</sup> This beautiful and vivid blazon of the Arms of the Friars Minor is from the skilful hand of the celebrated herald, Dr. John Woodward of Montrose, no longer living, alas! to charm us with his picturesque pen and brilliant erudition. See his "Ecclesiastical Heraldry," p. 418.



with tears, and at my heart there came a sore pang. He need not have spoken.

"Alas! he is dead, dear signore. He died close upon two months ago. We are all distracted, and suffer the sorest privations. He was such an excellent beggar, was our dear brother; we wanted for nothing. But he never wrote down anything. We do not know who his friends were in the big city. I, who am his unworthy successor, do not know whom to go to, and have no success. We are like to die of hunger, and our only hope is in God Almighty and our holy father St. Francis."

"I was one of his friends," I answered; "altogether unworthy one. Come to me when you come into the city and I will double my alms for the sake of his dear memory. Is he buried here?" I continued, again remembering Yorick and again blessing him.

"Over yonder, signore," replied the lay-brother, indicating a tiny *campo santo* not a quarter of a mile distant. His mute astonished look seemed to ask if it could be possible that I, a signore, that I, a *forestiere*, really wished to see the grave of a lay-brother of St. Francis? But I did not tell him, and bidding him cordially adieu, begged him to call upon me regularly when he came over to the "big city."

I found the grave for myself, a mound of earth with the grass not yet well grown upon it, and

at the head of it a wooden cross *pometty*, bearing this inscription :—

Qui riposa  
 Nel bacio del Signore  
 PACIFICO  
 Frate Laico dell' Ordine dei Minori Riformati  
 Nel secolo Raimondo de' Nobili Ciantiani di Arezzo.  
 Visse santamente Anni 62,  
 E santamente morì  
 addì 19 Marzo 1893.

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Una Prece.<sup>1</sup>

At the head of the grave, too, there was something more, something that had no business to be there—a clump of nettles. I did what Yorick did—I plucked them up. And then I sat down upon the mound and once more did what Yorick did, but what that was, the world, a hundred years the colder since, has now no care to comprehend or hear.

Dear Fra Pacifico, friend of an hour and memory of a lifetime, God have thee in His keeping through all Eternity.

R. I. P.

<sup>1</sup> Here lies, in our Lord's embrace, Pacifico, a lay-brother in the Order of the Reformed Franciscans, known in the world as Raymund, of the noble house of the Ciantiani of Arezzo. He lived a holy life of sixty-two years, and died a holy death on the 19th March 1893. Spare him at least one prayer.

## II

### MY UNPAID FACTOTUM

HE was the first acquaintance I made in Tuscany. I was leaning over the steamer's side looking down at the swarm of boats that surrounded her. I knew no word of the Tuscan tongue, and was dimly wondering how I should get myself and my luggage ashore, and to what extent I should be fleeced in the process, when a brown, clear eye from a boat below caught mine full. It belonged to a gaunt creature in blue serge suit and boating cap, with the face of a Mephistopheles and the bearing and manners of an Archangel. And from his mouth there issued (O dulcet sound!) English—as she is spoke, it is true—but English intelligible with an effort.

“Inglis gen'lman?” he queried with a polite grin.

I nodded, distrustfully perhaps.

“You come my boat, sair—ver good boat.”

I reflected a moment. The Mephistophelean face in repose I distrusted profoundly; animated, it seemed to glow with an extra dose of the milk of human kindness. For better or for worse I would go in his boat.

"All right!" I shouted down.

"Au'ri! Au'ri!" he shouted back with great contentment; and in two minutes more he was beside me on the deck possessing himself of my hand-bags and excitedly bawling directions about my big trunks.

We landed without misadventure; a cab of my guide's approving sprung, as if by magic, from the quay-side. He openly prevented me giving a silver five-franc piece to the boatman, and made that angry, baffled worthy content himself with two. Then came the difficult question of tipping him. I fingered a variety of coins diffidently, and finally got ready the five-franc piece he had saved me.

"What hotel you go to, gen'lman?"

I told him, and tried surreptitiously to pass the five-franc piece upon him. He pushed my arm politely away, gently forced me into the cab, and in a trice was on the box beside the driver.

At the hotel he came up to my room, and patiently and gleefully unstrapped all my boxes. "No spend silver moneys here," he said confidentially; "sell silver moneys and spend paper moneys. Me show Mister t'morr' mawnin'." Again I fumbled for the five-franc piece, but he was already at the door bowing me a stately "goo'-bye, sair!" I never managed to pass that particular tip; it was the first of a series of defeats which I sustained in attempts to reward loyal and valuable services.



This happened six years ago. I know my friend very well now, and prize him highly. His name is Carlo Bianchi; he is keeper of a boarding-house for English seamen. His dominant trait—if we put aside great natural good-nature—is an absorbing, awe-stricken admiration for everything and everybody English. You can only pain him in one way—if you call him either “Carlo” or “Bianchi.” He calls himself “Charlie White,” and spells Charlie “Cialì” on the card which announces that he has a “home” offering every comfort to members of the Mercantile Marine. It is this passionate admiration of everything British that prompts him, when he has nothing better to do, to go off in a boat to the steamers in the hope of being able to assist some helpless English traveller. He often meets with scant courtesy and withering scepticism at their hands, but remains undauntedly revering. We must indeed be a great and proud nation to have aroused all this admiration in the bosom of a Tuscan man of the world like “Cialì,” for as a rule he sees but degenerate specimens of the Britisher. The members of the English Mercantile Marine who come under his fatherly care are too often the worst of the class, men who have deserted from their ships, or lost their ships through drunken orgies, or who have been politely lodged in the tempered seclusion of a Tuscan gaol, or the still milder fastnesses of the

strong room of the Town Hospital consequent upon a Bacchanalian night-brawl. If he encouraged their vices he would get more men into his house, and put more money in his pocket. But he routs them out of unsavoury places, reclaims the wages of which they have been fleeced, packs them into boats, and sends them off to their ships to save them from desertion; and all this because he reveres the mighty British nation even in its dregs.

Nearly every morning "Ciall" presents himself at my house with the respectful offer of his services. I have to invent commissions to save him from lapsing into despondency. I do not pay him. He borrows freely, but always pays back. He will accept an old suit of clothes gladly, and wears it with swagger and distinction. I visit his fat "Signora" at the boarding-house sometimes, and contrive to slip trifles into the children's money-boxes. Filthy lucre I can only pass off on him by resorting to ruse. A firm of solicitors in England is paying for this, I say, or an English shipowner wants such and such a thing done; then all "Ciall's" scruples vanish. But I have to use this species of *finesse* sparingly, for he is wily and observant, well versed in every branch of honest deception, and a past-master in the gentle art of giving without seeming to give. Certainly his faith in human nature would receive a rude shock if he were ever to detect me in anything so perfidious as an attempt to reward

devoted services which were meant to be given out of pure loyalty and affection.

Poor "Ciall"! He managed to wind himself very closely about my heart-strings. Most keenly did I realise this one terrible night last December. I saw—a familiar enough sight—a company of the masked Misericordia Brothers running full tilt down the main street with their easy-sprunged hand ambulance cart, foot-passengers and traffic willingly making an avenue for them, as when a fire-engine tears along the London streets. The light of a fitful gas-lamp revealed the form of a prostrate human being in the cart, and then lit up with momentary horror the ghastly features of poor "Ciall" contorted with the anguish of mortal pain. I saw, with a pang at my heart, a sign which showed me it was a very serious case. These Misericordia Brothers, for all they are a religious confraternity, are a very practical set of people. One of the Brothers was running alongside, holding the dying man's wrist, and keeping his fingers upon the flickering pulse; in his left hand he held a large stop-watch, so that if the sufferer died upon the road the police could be informed of the exact moment of death. I followed swiftly towards the hospital; but before many moments were over the pace of the runners slackened, for the poor pulse had ceased to beat for ever.

It seems that two pot-valiant Welsh firemen

had got into an altercation with a sober Tuscan seaman. A real or fancied insult to the girl on the man's arm was the cause of it. The blood which gets into a Tuscan's head upon the venom motions of mad jealousy is more deadly than any drink: out came the inevitable knife. But "Ciallì," the peacemaker, was near at hand. He rushed up—too late alas!—to quench the flames, for the insensate Tuscan no longer knew what he did, and poor "Ciallì" received, just above the heart, the terrible blade that was meant for a far unworthier breast. And so he died, a martyr to his love of Great Britain, and in heroic devotion to her offscourings.

"Ciallì's" funeral was a great affair. All the waterside population turned out. Many British seamen were present; most of them took a turn at carrying the coffin the five long miles to the *Campo Santo*. Best of all, an English captain who had known him for years, and like everybody else used him as "unpaid factotum," brought a Red Ensign, and covered the coffin with it. Borne to his grave by British seamen and covered with the Union Jack! The tingling sensations of an honest, simple pride must surely have caused him to turn in his coffin. If the poor fellow could but have known of the honours that awaited him in death, how exultantly he would have marched into the undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns. May his soul rest in peace!



### III

#### MY COOK

AFTER a year's residence in Tuscany, with growing love of the place and people, and a modest acquisition of the Tuscan tongue, I decided upon a bold step—I decided to abandon the artificial comfort of hotel existence and set up house. Many difficult questions presented themselves, but all seemed simplicity itself in comparison with the great servant question. How to find a serving-man, and an elderly housemaid, and a tolerable cook, who would not ill-treat a lonely foreign bachelor? I secured a grey-haired treasure of a housemaid—Concetta—(through no merits of my own, it is true), but cooks—they came pouring in upon me for three days, animated, loud-voiced, well-mannered women of all ages, dressed in their flaming best for the occasion, all endowed seemingly with every perfection, their one desire in life to serve me unto death. One and all got fearfully on my nerves, and nearly caused me to abandon my temerarious project.

But on the morrow of the fourth day there

presented herself a small, neat, carefully-appareled woman, animated like the others, for she was a Tuscan, but quiet of voice, and with better manners and a more restrained bearing than most duchesses. Of a melancholy cast, too, which was rather an advantage, for the hilarious happiness of the Tuscan servant is a little detrimental to the tranquillity desirable in a student home. Yet since the Tuscans regard melancholy as a species of rudeness, so her good manners seemed to have taught her to assume a gladness that she did not feel.

"What is your name?" I queried magisterially.

"Elvirina Pezzi, signore."

"And your age?"

A pause. By a delicately-shaded change of manner she managed to convey that I had asked an indelicate and unmasculine question. Perhaps I betrayed a sign of irritation.

"Thirty-one or two, signore," she answered hastily, "or perhaps thirty-three. I do not very well remember." (She was forty-two, I found out afterwards.)

"Why did you leave your last place?"

"Because my *padroni* go every year to their country house and take all the servants. I do not like leaving the town."

"Are you married?"

"No, signore."

"Have you any family or relations here?"

"No, signore. At least none except a little nephew."

"A nephew?"

"Sissignore. The little son of my only sister, Elettra. My poor dear sister and Ezio, her husband, were carried off in the last epidemic of cholera, and there is none to care for the dear little angel but me. Ah! you should see him, signore. What a sweet *angiolino* it is?"

All her assumed cheerfulness vanished, a look of trouble and solicitude and great tenderness came into her eyes. I was moved myself, and admired such devotion to a sister's child. It jarred upon the situation, but I was obliged to ask—

"What wages have you been in the habit of receiving?"

"Forty francs a month, signore."

"I cannot give you more than thirty."

She would have bargained with me but for the strong emotion under which she was labouring.

"For the sake of serving so good a *padrone*, I will come for thirty," she said. "If I content him he will give more in time. It is hard to maintain my little nephew on thirty."

"What is the name of your late master? Will he let me call on him for your character?"

"Eh! I should think so! The General Magliani. A most worthy gentleman, but that

he would go into the country, and I do not like that. He lives at 39 Via Cavour. He will give the best of informations about me, for I have ever known how to content his palate. He is utterly displeased that I should go. 'Elvirina,' he would say to me many a time, 'thy *risotto* and thy *spaghetti a sugo di carne*——' "

"Very good," I said, interrupting the flow; "come back to-morrow morning, and if I receive a good character I will engage you."

"Then I feel that the signore has already engaged me."

She smiled an apology for the little familiarity, and retired with a polite curtsy.

In the afternoon I called upon the general. He was out, but his signora was in. I sent in word what my mission was. She would be delighted to see me; would I pass this way?

I passed into a tiny, cheerless reception-room, overloaded with an immense quantity of florid, tasteless knick-knacks. A fat, rubicund, good-natured-looking lady of forty-five or so—comfortable contrast to her garish surroundings—greeted me cordially, and motioned me to be seated.

"I have taken the liberty of calling for the character of Elvirina Pezzi," I began.

"You may engage her with your eyes shut," the good-natured lady replied decisively. "An excellent cook, and a sober, steady, hard-working, and very honest woman."



There seemed really nothing else to say after this graphic summary of her perfections.

Diffidently I added, "May I ask what wages you paid her?"

"Twenty-five francs a month, with wine."

"Twenty-five!" with a little surprise in my voice. "She told me she had been in the habit of receiving forty!"

"Ha! ha! ha! the little witch!" laughed the good-natured lady with great good-humour. "She received forty francs from an ignorant American gentleman ten years ago, and it was the joke of the whole market-place. Since then I don't suppose she has ever received more than twenty-five!"

I didn't like this trifling with truth. "But I've promised to give her thirty!" I said plaintively.

"Ah, well! they take advantage of you foreigners. It is a real shame. But she will serve you well. She is worth thirty francs. I would give her thirty francs myself if I could keep her."

"She left you, I believe, because——"

"Because she does not like coming to the country with us. She does not care to go away and leave that little rascal of a son of hers."

"Son!" I leapt from my chair in agitation. "But it is a nephew!" I cried, scarce knowing what I said in my trepidation. The fat lady was convulsed with good-natured merriment.

"You may call him a nephew if you like," she said, amid her chuckles, "but he's her own son!"

"But she said she wasn't married!" I cried, outspoken in my bewilderment.

This fairly set the fat lady off in uncontrollable laughter. These Tuscan ladies are disconcertingly plain-spoken on such subjects.

"Why, *caro signore*, marriage is not an indispensable preliminary to the birth of a son," she said.

It required time for her to recover from her merriment.

"But," I persisted, "it is her sister's son—Elettra. She and her husband—Ezio, I think—died within twenty-four hours of one another in the last outbreak of cholera!"

This was too much for the fat lady, who began to irritate and annoy me by her want of restraint and reserve. She was holding her handkerchief before her mouth, and the tears were streaming down her cheeks.

"She has no sister!" she cried convulsively. And then with difficulty, "And Heaven be praised, we haven't had the cholera here for thirty years!"

I thanked her stiffly.

"Signora," I said, "I'm much obliged to you for your outspoken frankness. You have saved me the unpleasantness of taking a bad character into my house. I thank you. Good afternoon."

She glanced at me with good-natured surprise.

"Come, come, *caro signore*, you take too serious a view of the matter. It is nothing. It happens perpetually." (I winced at her terrible outspokenness.) "Elvirina is none the worse cook in consequence. I tell you she is an excellent servant. She is an excellent mother, too, devoted to the boy. And she is quite steady, and has no lover now." (Again I winced.) "You will not repent having engaged her. Good afternoon, signore," she added a trifle stiffly as she glanced into my face, which, I suppose, was hard and conventionally set; "if I had known the effect of my frank avowal, I should have supported Elvirina's statement and said it was a nephew." A shade of the good-natured twinkle returned into her eyes.

All this was very surprising, but I was mightily disgusted with Elvirina and her barefaced lies. I couldn't help liking the woman, I saw she was a good servant; but I was fully resolved not to have her in my house at any price. Still, I did not at all relish the task of meeting her next day. I could not hope to attain Tuscan free-and-easiness of speech on the subject of "nephews." It is a difficult subject for an untutored Saxon to handle delicately face to face with a woman. I resolved that I would not touch upon it but put her off with a diplomatic shuffle. But the situation was awkward and unpleasant; I worked myself into a state of nervous helplessness, and

by the time she came was wholly without a plan of action.

"The signore will have received good informations about me?" she asked eagerly.

Her question nonplussed me. To answer "No" would have compromised the Signora Magliani, and would not have been quite true. I was therefore whirled into answering "Yes."

"Then the signore will engage me as he said?" Her directness bereft me of all diplomatic suavity of language.

"No," I answered curtly.

"Then he has received bad informations about me?"

"No." It was really too foolish this helplessness of mine. I must imitate her own directness. "You told me you had received forty francs a month," I said severely.

"But not from the Signora Magliani. I have received forty francs a month though." (That was quite true.) "If it is a question of wages, I will come to so good a signore for twenty-five francs. It is little. I have to pay fifteen francs a month for my nephew's board and lodging, and five francs for his schooling; that leaves me but five francs a month for myself."

This further reference to the "nephew" roused me to the full.

"You say he is your nephew, but he is your son!" I cried, with Anglo-Saxon brutality.



The woman pursed her lips and controlled herself.

"Did the Signora Magliani tell you that? It is no business of hers. It surprises me that so well-conducted a lady—she herself, too, a mother—could be so indelicate." (How delicious!) "It is true he is my son! And what then?"

"But you said he was your nephew. I like truthful people!" I answered sternly.

Elvirina looked a little perplexed. She seemed to regard me as a species of barbarian unaccustomed to the usages and phraseology of civilised society.

"That is a form of expression among us," she said quietly. (And has been for centuries, I reflected, as I thought of the historical nepotism of her country.) "It is no lie. If the signore objects to such a trifle it is evident that I shall not content him. But I am a good cook, and work hard. What more can he wish from me?"

Tears stood full in her eyes as she curtsied to depart. Whatever her past levities might have been, it was evident that she was sobered now; work and the "nephew" were the two concerns of her life. It would have needed a woman to reject her at that moment; I was only a helpless bachelor, launched upon the devious paths of housekeeping, and I engaged her there and then.

My cook has proved a great success. She is

unassuming, uncomplaining, very hard-working, and a bit of a *cordon bleu*. She cannot read or write, for all her splendour out of doors. Sometimes she tries to cheat herself out of a *soldo* in doing accounts; I don't think she tries to cheat me. The "nephew" I have never seen. He might not exist, and need never have been mentioned. But we refer to him without shamefacedness, and call him a "son." I have sent him useless toys, and this Christmas that is coming I mean to raise Elvirina to the pitch of earthly happiness by telling her to have him to dinner in the kitchen.



TWO DOMINICAN NUNS



TWO CAPUCHIN SISTERS



A CRUTCHED FRIAR



TWO SISTERS OF CHARITY OF  
ST. VINCENT OF PAUL



TWO SISTERS OF MERCY



A CAPUCHIN LAY BROTHER



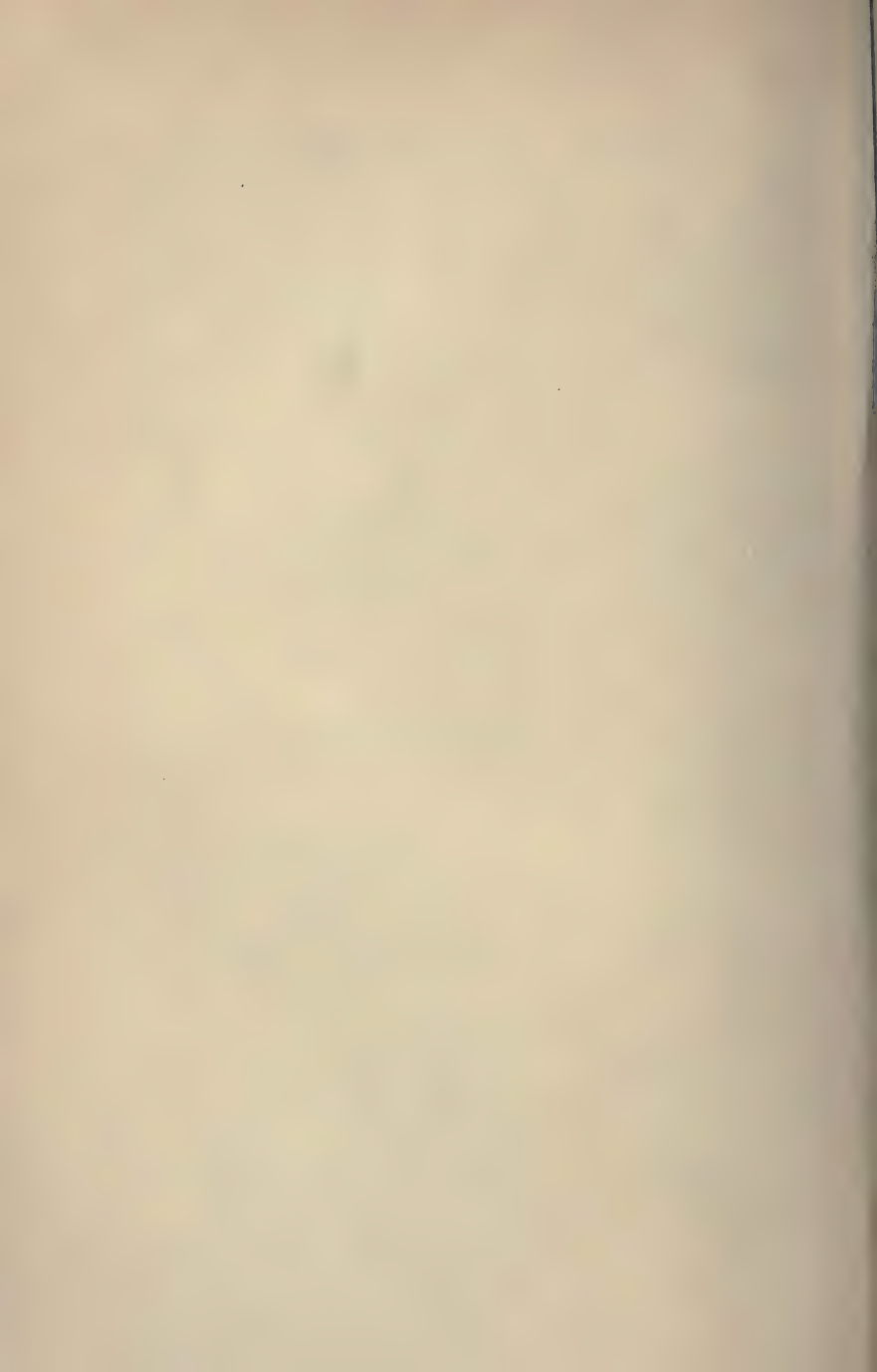
A SECULAR PRIEST



TWO POLICEMEN (Old Uniform)

# LEGHORN TYPES

*Photographs by Dr. PIETRO ROSSINI, Leghorn.*





## IV

### MY SERVING-MAN

I WOULD to Heaven that I had never set eyes upon my serving-man, Benedetto, and yet I would not for all the world throw away a pearl of so great price. Still, it is an unkind trick of the Fates to have sent so puzzling and eerie a creature to black the boots and brush the clothes of an exiled Anglo-Saxon. He is a pattern of diligence and honesty certainly, but his perfections are too disquieting : they are the perfections of the saint, while his imperfections, product of some clownish admixture in the man's clay, are irritating in the extreme. No serving-man is entitled to have so much character—to have, in fact, self-abnegation that is tragic, virtue that is heroic, religious aspirations that are saintly, and at the same time manners that are boorish, and physical deficiencies that are provoking and repellent. What if this does not interfere with the housework? It interferes—a much more important thing—with the master's peace of mind, and leads him to lengthy ruminative digressions when he should be trying to fathom quite other philo-

sophy. Why indeed am I always studying him and speculating about him, instead of grumbling at his hard and willing and conventionally-imperfect service, or ordering him to the devil for his stupid inability to understand my bad Tuscan? There is something in this more than natural if philosophy could find it out.

Benedetto is fifty-six years of age, very bowed at the shoulders and bent at the knees. The crumpled, withered skin of his face, yellow and blistered as ancient vellum, is drawn tight across high cheek-bones. Two narrow slits reveal eyes, mild and meek and upturned, as in the rough prints of *seicento* Saints of the Clerks Regular. His grizzled hair is sparse and unkempt, and the semi-bald crown of his pate has a great dent in the centre of it. He wears a small black moustache and *pizzo* that on any other face would be rakish, and serve at least to hide his sanctity from the unobservant. He has a singular knack of besmearing new clothes, and imparting to them an instant semblance of old-world shabbiness. He looks anything on earth but a serving-man; and as he shuffles along to market to do some of the cook's forgotten errands, rapt in far-distant meditations, he seems like nothing so much as a beggar who has momentarily forgotten to beg. Such in his outer seeming is Benedetto Bonanima, the serving-man whom the gods have sent to plague me with his service and to

bless me with his loving-kindness and exceeding honesty.

The Tuscans are very quick at finding out heroic virtue be it never so secretive, and when they have discovered a saint, they lift the bushel which had hid his virtues and blazon him in the market-place. Hence it comes that there were plenty of homely hagiographers to tell me scraps of the life of San Benedetto. He had served his previous and only master, a rich bachelor of studious habits and very irregular life, some thirty-five years. This same master, the Cavaliere Ugo della Chiala, was one of the characters of the town. A distinguished numismatologist and archæologist, a fellow and member of numerous antiquarian and historical societies, his opinion sought by all the learned of the Continent, he yet led within the precincts of his gloomy old palazzo a life that set at defiance all the conventionalities, and rivalled in its dissoluteness the hare-brained extravagances of a raw patrician boy. When Benedetto had done with the army at twenty-one he was a smart enough young fellow, very innocent and good-hearted it is true, but famed rather among waiting-women and the *popolane* for the brilliance of his amatory badinage. Service with Signor Ugo della Chiala sobered him completely, and changed all the current of his life. The scholarly *vaurien* was a man of charming presence and manners; he played havoc in

the heart of poor Benedetto, and subdued him to an infinite and most tender affection. But here came the mischief: he could not be blind to his master's vaunting delinquencies; he could not approve nor abet them; and so, torn between love and duty, he cried to Heaven for help and began to go much to church, to thumb big books of prayer, and spell out the maxims of odd little books and leaflets of piety. His master loved him too, and understood him, and seeing that he had no trusted friend in the world save Benedetto, he accorded him all the immunities of a privileged being. The serving-man worked and slaved at the most menial tasks, anticipated in a thousand ways the master's wants, but in no single thing did he minister unto evil, and he would not wait at table when, as was often the case, the company was doubtful beyond a doubt.

The strain of such a life was terrible. It bowed poor Benedetto's back and crooked his knees, but he remained undauntedly loving, unweariedly slaving, incessantly praying and wrestling for his beloved *padrone's* soul. Had the master been unqualifiedly wicked the thing would have been less perplexing, but that he should have been so fond of books and cloistered quiet and yet so full of the tempestuous joy of life, so open-handed and adored of the poor, and yet so given up to riotous living—it was more than the



much wrought serving-man could ever rightly comprehend. And so more and more he betook himself to church, to beating his breast in nightly supplications, to thumbing his bulky prayer-book, and spelling out the hard sentences of his books of piety. Thus gradually, and all unconsciously, he developed into a much afflicted, anxious, and very humble saint.

But Benedetto had his happy hours—nay, his happy weeks and months. There were times when the love and excitement of his studies completely overmastered the gay numismatologist. Then all bad company was rigorously excluded from the house; quiet and a great tranquillity reigned supreme, and the happy Benedetto seemed to himself like a lay-brother serving in the calm seclusion of a peaceful convent. This was especially the case when the master saw that his now famous work, *De Monetis Etruriæ*, was at length taking shape under his hand, and forgot himself in the love of it. Ah! those were long happy months, in which the master was encompassed by a loving care and solicitude that surely touched his heart, and certainly helped him to complete his labours. Poor Benedetto began timorously to think him wholly changed and reclaimed, but the day that the last corrected proof went back to the publishers there was a terrible and prolonged outbreak.

Ruin came upon this singular prodigal, a com-

plete ruin of his estate and a paralytical ruin of his body. The three months that the broken-down scholar still lingered on in a modest quarter on the third floor of a poor-class tenement, he is said to have been supported out of the thrifty hire of his serving-man. And Benedetto brought him an old Capuchin priest, saw him anointed with the holy oils, knew that he made his confession, was present when he received the Viaticum, and followed with a certain confused happiness to his last resting-place in the family vault of the della Chiala.

Then on the top of such a life and such an affection as this, his substance gone, his heart's core sore and bruised, his poor mind dazed and reeling, he is suddenly pitchforked into the service of a prosaic Anglo-Saxon, who but half understands his beautiful tongue, and is wholly innocent of any violent contrasts of character. I have watched the poor fellow with a pathetic interest trying cheerfully and with unostentatious resignation to adapt himself to his new and strange environment, and in the process I have come to love him. I have tried hard, too, for the sake of his virtues to like him as a servant. I cannot. He is grotesque in his anxious slavishness, uncouth in the manner of pressing his attentions, irritating in his too palpable assumptions of cheerfulness, dense in taking in the difference between a Tuscan's and a Saxon's wants.

But how he works! Slovenly in his own person, his dearest delight is the cleanliness of the house, and I can see my face every morning reflected in my bright and shining boots. He is familiar, of course; every good Tuscan servant is. If they do not literally sit below the salt, as in the days when class distinctions were more apparent than real, they occupy a position in the house which implies quite as much intimacy and contact. You will get no good work out of them unless you have engaged their hearts, unless they can come to the master as a sure and infallible and sympathetic counsellor in all the many matters of palpitating human interest with which their lives are filled.

There is a certain perverse cleverness about poor stupid Benedetto: when most of all you are sure that he will do wrong, he does right. In very difficult matters he is especially successful, and you cannot help feeling sometimes that all his prayers are not said in vain, and that a little angelic aid does come to his rescue in a crisis. He delivers a verbal message wonderfully well, though it takes a world of anxious understanding before it can be safely conveyed into his head. It is just here that the flow of his talk and his panic-stricken gesticulations are particularly irritating. He is quick in returning from an errand if there is an answer; very slow if there is not. But I have ceased to chide him, for I know the

reason. These churches—he cannot pass an open church without turning in and commending himself to Almighty God and the Blessed Virgin, unless there be some weighty house-affairs on hand.

Dear Benedetto, with all his faults, which I verily believe are, in a measure, of mine own creation, I would not part with him for the cleanest, best trained, most punctilious, clean-shaven automaton of a valet in the world. The atmosphere in Tuscany is so charged with tragedy and the potentialities of old romance, ruin and calamity take such giant shape here: in the storm and stress of such a moment, in the hour, perhaps, of shame and disgrace, who else would stand by me save this old man, so well-schooled in the vagaries of human perversity? Until need drive me to serve myself, he shall serve me; if need leave me but a crust, he shall share that too, for, certes, two mouths do sweeten adversity. And when he dies, though his life has been one long purgatory, many masses shall be said for the repose of his already resting soul. Stay with me then, Benedetto, and give me all the benefit of thy constant antique service. Wrestle a little in prayer. The mystery why God made Anglo-Saxons will become transparent to thee, and thou shalt plenteously find, deep-hidden beneath our rough tough hides, the bowels of compassion and of clemency. “In the battle, in the darkness,



in the need," do thou cling to me as I will cling to thee, and together, content and confident, we may confront even those direst ills that plagued the primal chosen favourites of the Lord.

## V

### MY GARDENER

My gardener is no real gardener, for my garden is scarcely a garden. At the back of my little house, which because it is a separate house and not a flat is dignified with the name of palazzetta—at the back, then, of this miniature palazzetta, jutting out into my neighbour's noble spreading gardens, is a narrow, high-walled strip of ground. One quarter of it is paved with backyard flags, and down the middle and on either side run brick-paved paths, flanked, at justly chosen intervals, by stucco pillars surmounted by squatting—talbots or alants I would call them, but that these dogs are too grotesque even for the fantastic science of heraldry. Large blue and white pots of commonest terra-cotta, tottering insecure on stucco pedestals, drop ivy, periwinkles, stone-crop, and other hardy creeping plants. A fig tree, a medlar tree, three orange and two lemon trees, a bush or two of monthly roses, a plant or two of pansies, begonias and nasturtiums, thyme and mint for kitchen use, and sweet lavender for the linen-press, a myriad

of busy lizards by day, a multitude of dancing fire-flies by night, owls, too, and the shrill screeching *cicale*:—all this is evidence that the little plot does occasionally need the fostering care of the hand of man.

And Benedetto found me just the right man to care for it—Paolo, a brother acquaintance in affliction. But Paolo is no gardener now. Time was when for five years he was gardener to the General of the Division, earning the handsome wage of forty-five livres a month, and having free lodging in a mouldy, tumble-down outhouse at the bottom of the General's garden. But the General went away to command another Division elsewhere, and from that day Paolo went down, down, and has never been able to recover himself since. First he tried to keep up his proud position, and, for fear of losing caste, rightly would not work unless he could be permanent gardener to one master only; he spent all his savings in the effort. Then he tried to work for masters with small gardens that only required looking to once or twice a week. Nothing prospered with him; he could get neither the one kind of employment nor the other, and was obliged to abandon gardens and become a day labourer in the fields near the city walls. It made him sad, but being in a dumb way rather a righteous man, he bowed his head and did not complain.

To do a hind's work for the *contadini* owners and tenants of the fields is a hard task. In the summer, when the day's labour is fifteen hours, Paolo's monthly wage is twenty-six livres; in the winter there is either no work, or but a short day's work, and the monthly incomings sink to eighteen livres—and less! In the long days he has two hours' interval, and of this he gives me half-an-hour or more, bringing me drinking water in barrels from the public founts, tending and skilfully beautifying the little plot of ground, and generally doing any and whatsoever unusual and obnoxious house job may arise. For these services I pay him—to my shame be it said!—five livres, or three shillings and fourpence a month. But stern economists threateningly tell me that I am ruining the market in not giving him only four livres, or two and eightpence a month, and I dare trifle no further with their sacred canons. I add, unknown to them, beef bones, broken bits, and the foul nicotined ends of cast-away Tuscan and Torinese cigars, which he chops up and smokes with relish in his unclean terra-cotta pipe.

Paolo is a much afflicted creature, barefoot, ill-clothed, begrimed, and seemingly always wetted through; sad and subdued when not under observation, so hilariously cheerful when spoken to, you would suppose him to be rioting in this world's goods, instead of earning a wage that



does not help to ward off the diseases produced by hunger unsatisfied. Short and sturdily built, though the flesh hangs skinnily about him now, he is lithe and active, and can go up the tall stem of the medlar tree like a monkey. He has a thick shock of greyish hair, a thick greyish moustache, soft eyes expressing strong desire to serve and oblige, and a se'nnight's stubble that never grows to beard, but is yet ever innocent of the razor. His age you could not guess, nor could you imagine him ever to have been different to what he is, and even after two years' service I do not know his surname. He is simply Paolo, and there is but one such. Patient, skilful, willing, very soft-hearted, very useful, and with a certain careworn, stately courtesy of manner shining out of all his grime, his life is hard, and underpaid, and unappreciated, and has but one sweet memory—the proud lustrum of slavery as gentleman's gardener to one master only.

Heaven in its mercy has denied to Paolo any offspring of his loins. But he has a wife, Caterina, older than himself, I should say, and ugly, very fat, though she fares chiefly on the chameleon's dish—a sort of swaddled bundle of a woman, in fact, of uniform girth from the shoulders downwards. With her I have entered into a fell and secret conspiracy against the first principles of political economy—she supplies me with

eggs which she buys, and I pay her, for every dozen, one penny above the market price. I dare not breathe this politico-economical offence abroad, but I hope it may cause many a drear spook of the economical schools, fidgety, wandering, unquiet nights. The quantity of eggs consumed in my little household is enormous. Custard is a standing dish, and omelette a daily *piatto*. Caterina speaks of me as a benefactor, believes it too in a confused, reasonless fashion, and I have given up attempting to undeceive her. She never speaks without weeping, and can, I verily believe, weep with one eye at a time. Her tears are wonderful. Each is such a marvellous clear dewdrop. I watch them, with a fascinated stare, ooze out and run down her fat face, and disappear and dry up utterly by some strange quality, before half their piteous journey's done. She has but one long tooth left in the front of her old mouth, and round it, as the pearly drops course down, she whiffles strange incantations charged with blessings for my sick soul's weal.

It was this old serving-wench of Ceres who was the first woman that ever gave me a bunch of flowers. In some foolish, unguarded moment of expansion I had told Benedetto that the morrow was my birthday. The news spread abroad. In the morning Caterina and Paolo, dressed in their poor best for the occasion, the

old dame bearing a mighty pyramidal bouquet of flowers (stolen, I rather suspect, by a gardener friend, from some rich garden that would never miss them), stood bashful and happy in the little hall. Tied by a blue silk riband to the solid stem of the bouquet was a card bearing the inscription: "*Al nostro amatissimo padrone con mille felici augurj da Paolo e Caterina.*" I was poor in my thanks. Anglo-Saxon awkwardness took possession of me, and something like a Tuscan lump rose up in my throat. Poor dear souls! so much love and kindly courtesy in return for a miserly pittance of pay and the brokenest refuse of bits. Assuredly there is some finer quality in the grossest Tuscan clay which is wanting even in the better sorts of human clay in other countries.

Paolo's whole life is from my point of view heroic, for he belongs to the elect who have their purgatory here instead of hereafter. But there was a day in his life when, under my roof, he became the popular hero of the hour. Jack Curtis, his wife, and small boy from England were staying with me at the time. Dick, the small boy, is at the fascinating age of seven, and the most charming of companions. I was delighted when he was once or twice trusted alone in the house with me. On one of those days I sat smoking a contemplative pipe at the open garden door, regarding the heraldic dogs,

while Master Dick was in and out of the house romping, exploring, and enjoying himself vastly. Presently I heard a crash and a loud child's cry, followed by a terrible stillness. I flew into the garden. At the kitchen window was the blanched, terror-stricken face of the cook, staring in paralysed horror at the well beneath the window. I, too, gave a cry. The well is boarded over, and in the middle there is a trap-door, which I saw had disappeared. I realised what had happened, and rushed forward. Gazing in an agony of fear down the narrow aperture, I saw little Dick thirty feet below me in the dank darkness, his little white face turned pathetically up to the sunlight, his hands clutched tightly round a metal pipe that ran down the side of the well. The boy's extraordinary self-possession gave me nerve at a moment when I felt panic coming down upon me. "Get me out!" shouted the plucky little beggar up to me. But how to do it? I contemplated jumping, but saw that I should jump on the top of him, so narrow was the well. "It's cold!" he shouted again. "Get me out!"

At that moment I heard behind me the hasty patter of bare feet on the brick path. Paolo, whose existence I had forgotten, was up the fig tree and had seen everything. He flew up, armed already with a rope—the clothes line it proved to be. Benedetto, attracted by the noise, had come out. He and I held one end of the



line, and Paolo went down—how I saw not. He tied up little Dick securely, and Benedetto and I hauled him up, while Paolo took his turn of hanging on to the metal pipe. Then we let down the rope again, and Paolo came up in his monkey fashion. I poured half a glass of Marsala down Master Dick's throat, had him put in a hot bath, and by the time his father and mother came back, the young rascal was romping in the hall, absolutely without bruise or scath. Small wonder that the good townsfolk thought him saved by a miracle, and gave the glory of it to Our Lady of Succour, whose miraculous image they venerate on the hills close by.

But Benedetto had rushed off to recount the marvellous event at the office of the local paper, and next morning there appeared a flaming article headed "Heartrending incident ; an English child saved from drowning by a heroic gardener." It was thus that popular admiration pierced the mantle of Paolo's humility, and made him for the moment the hero of the hour.

It is since this event that I have seriously thought of withdrawing from the town to the country, where houses with large gardens are cheap, and where I shall be able to attach to myself for ever the loyal services and honest loving hearts of Paolo and his wife Caterina.

## VI

### MY VETTURINO

CABMEN play a very important part in Tuscan life, and they are perhaps the most genial class of this genial clime. Even in a city of a hundred thousand inhabitants, if you are a settler there, you attach to yourself a particular *vetturino* and employ no other. He calls for orders every morning if you are a great cab-rider, or you send to the rank and leave orders for him with his bitterest rival should he himself be absent, and they are always safely delivered. He becomes almost a member of your household; with such fervour does he serve you, and, by an artfully suggested exclusiveness, you and you only, that it really seems as if you were keeping a horse and carriage free of bother and expense. Carriages I should have said, for every Tuscan cabman keeps two cabs, a closed and comfortable growler, for use when the bitter *tramontana* blows, and a natty, smart, open calash screened with canvas curtains, for use in the fierce heat of the Tuscan dog-days. Cabs in Tuscany are under the jurisdiction of the municipality, who fix

the tariff, a livre for a journey of any length in this city, which is three miles across, and a livre and a half if you take a cab by the hour. But no one save a stranger thinks of paying the tariff rate; most cabmen gladly take sixty or seventy centimes for a *corso*, and do but stand by the tram-rails and seem to be waiting for the hated tram, and there are few cabmen who will not dash up and offer to take you for half a livre.

They are skilful drivers, these Tuscan *vetturini*, for they have attained the art of an alarming dash and recklessness of career which is showy, and yet never results in mishap. They use the whip freely in their mad career, but only to crack it in mid-air as a warning to vehicles and pedestrians who may be coming down the side streets, and as an expression of their joy in life and of pride in the distinguished burden—yourself—they are bearing. They believe in but one evil maxim—and that is sometimes open to defence—that it is lawful to fleece the foreigner if he is foolish enough to let them do it. Of all classes, they are the most ready at chaff and repartee, the best conversationalists, and the happiest story-tellers. You could scarcely have brighter company than a Tuscan *vetturino*, nor need you ever fear over-familiarity or presumption if you encourage him to talk. All the lower classes in Tuscany are ladies and gentlemen, full of discretion, tact, and good manners—a

circumstance which adds much to the delight of life in a Tuscan town.

Beniamino is my cabman's name, but as every popular cabman is *sopranominato* or nicknamed, so Beniamino is more usually called "Grillo," or the grasshopper, perhaps because he always vaults on and off his box without touching the wheel. He is a cheery, good-for-nothing rascal, with no end of virtues, the bright blue eye and ruddy countenance of a popular naughty boy, and a grown-up and still increasing family.

This is how I came to attach him. At first, through ignorance or a British love of independence, I employed no one *vetturino*, but was indifferently served by all and sundry, by Beniamino amongst others. One day I met the rascal on foot. He stopped me respectfully ; with melancholy downcast look and tears in his blue eyes he produced a dirty schedule with many names and trifling sums inscribed upon it. His poor horse had dropped down dead, he said, and all the noble gentlemen of the city, all the Conti and Commendatori and Cavalieri, were subscribing to buy him another. Would not my lordship, too, whose goodness of heart was in every mouth, contribute a trifle ? I believed the knave to be lying, but he was irresistible. I gave him two livres.

About three weeks after this he passed me from behind in a lonely road, once more on the box of his cab. With his whip he pointed in



pride to a new cream-coloured mare, an absurd animal with thick arched neck and hollow back, that seemed to have walked out of one of Pinturichio's frescoes. Was I going home? Would I not try his new horse? I preferred to walk, I answered surlily. He hopped from his box and opened the cab door. I must, he said, really try his new horse, which was the best and swiftest in the city. Again he was irresistible, and I let him drive me home a mile or more. But at my house door as I produced a livre, he surprised me by making ready to drive off. I was a signore of heart, he said, and had helped him in the hour of need. I had only honoured him too much by trying his new horse. It was gracefully done, and with all the delicacy of fine, old-fashioned, high-bred courtesy.

"Beniamino," I said, calling him back sternly.

"Signore?"

"I have no regular cabman and want one. Will you be my man?"

"O signore!" His heart was too full for speech, the ready tears stood in his eyes, but quickly recovering himself, he leapt on his box with a polite bow and drove off at a galloping pace, cracking his whip unceasingly as a vent to his delight and contentment in the great good news.

Beniamino had served me for a year or more, fairly well: there are better cabmen in the town,

I know, but none altogether so engaging. I knew nothing of cab tariffs in these early greenhorn days (*minchione*, they call a greenhorn in Tuscany), and though I never paid more than a livre for a ride, in all things else, as I now know, I grossly overpaid him. It was after about a year of this fleecing, that he stood one day in my hall waiting to see me. He had come on foot without his cab. Never have I seen Merry Andrew so transformed to gloom and sheer despondency. He was twiddling his soft hat rapidly in his fingers. His blue eyes wandered nervously round the hall, and rested anxiously on my right hand as if he expected to find a horse-whip there.

"Signore?" he began. His hat was going round at a great rate.

"Well, Beniamino, what is it?" I queried; "I do not want you to-day."

"It's not that, signore——" He looked at the marble floor in the hope that it might gape and swallow him, and round and round went the hat in ever swifter circles. I began to divine what it was. The Pinturrichian horse had in his turn dropped down dead, or Beniamino's father had died, or his bread-winning son had gone to hospital. He had come to beg I was sure. I liked the rogue, and was quite ready to help him; I admired his seeming modesty and confusion, and answered kindly—

"Come, what is it, Beniamino? Are you in trouble? We are old friends now, and I will willingly help you if I can."

It was when I called him "friend" that he groaned aloud, and looked more and more miserably ashamed and contrite; looked, too, all round about to see if Heaven and the Madonna would not deliver him from his present horrible position.

"It is not that, caro signore," he answered ruefully. "The fact is, signoria,—you have become such a good citizen—one of us, in fact, if your lordship will allow me to say so—I can bear it no longer—I confess it—I have charged you too much all this year—I have treated you like a *forestiere*, and made you pay the tariff and more. But do not abandon me for that, kind signore—I will serve you as no other signore is served, and never again will I take a penny more from you than a good citizen would give me."

He was literally kneeling before me with clasped hands and sad remorseful mien, while I was doing what I could to keep a stern countenance in the presence of this curious display of honesty, knavery, penitence, and affection. I dismissed him with a severe lecture, under which he writhed terribly, and I threatened for the future to put him on half-pay, a prospect which seemed to fill him with the greatest delight. I could not for the life of me be seriously angry

with the transparent knave : he is altogether irresistible.

Things balance and adjust themselves wonderfully in Tuscany, but always seemingly with a handsome figure to your credit. A man irritates you with some little vice, and, before you have time to feel the full effects of the smart, salves the sore with the balsam of some unexpected virtue. Beniamino overcharged me the first year ; I underpaid him the second. Then we were quits. But in the third year and the fourth, I have continued to underpay him. Who, then, is the greater sinner ? But I must do as other good citizens do : custom is very potent in old Etruria.

When a Tuscan is in your service, be it never so informally, he becomes a pattern of honour and honesty if you use him well. I would trust Beniamino alone in my study if the floor were strewn with broad gold pieces. Indeed, I often put him in a position to rob my house at his leisure. The Tuscan latch-key is something of the size of a Caribbean club, useful enough in braining a highwayman, but too cumbersome for any known pocket. When I go to a dance on a hot summer's night without any overcoat, it would be necessary to carry the key in my hand, and leave it with the flunkey in exchange for a number. Instead, I hand it to Beniamino, who might easily *lose* it to an accomplice, and,



with the servants in bed, my house might be leisurely rifled. It is laughable at 3 A.M. to see him produce the key from under his box seat and softly undo my door for me with a broad grin and a cheery whispered, "*Felicissima notte, signoria!*"

Beniamino is a great popular favourite. Mightily beloved of children is this big boy of forty-eight, and being, in his manner at least, somewhat of a gay Lothario, it is easy to see that cooks and waiting-women are made very mirthful by a word from him. The least virtuous Tuscan in my service, I yet confess that the mere thought of losing him causes me a pang, and whatsoever his present and future shortcomings may be, he is likely to remain my *vetturino* for ever, since I should not know how to shake off this cheery, happy, affectionate creature. He has given me too many proofs of it already: the rascal is entirely irresistible.

## VII

### THE POOR IDIOT

BEGGARS are one of the great charms of existence in Tuscany. They are picturesque, cheery, well-mannered ; superlative actors ; superb studies in the physiological and psychological aspects of poverty ; accomplished and varied conversationalists ; and they have withal a wealth and power of benediction so strong and efficacious, that it really seems to bear fruit in your own most hungry and poverty-stricken soul.

At first you remember the dignity and the irrefragability of the maxims of Anglo-Saxon political economy, and angrily resent all beggars ; in return they give you unpaid lessons in bonhomie and good manners ; and in the end you succumb to them. They serve their purposes. They help to keep alive in you the good habit of indiscriminate giving which Poor Laws and Charity Organisations are apt to choke out of your soul under the leaden skies of Cockneydom. They make so much of you, too ; they have such a happy way of making you feel your own honour and dignity, that you begin to bless Will Shake-

speare for having taught you that a man's best deserts still merit him a whipping, and the less men deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. And so, naturally, you begin to use them after your own honour and dignity, and the honour and dignity of a well-conditioned gentleman seem to require that he should give a two-centime piece to every tattered rascal who asks an alms of him. If you have not got it, say, *Non c'ho nulla, pover'uomo:—un'altra volta*—I've not got anything, poor fellow—another day—and you may pass on your way without further molestation and be sure of the same fervent blessing as if you had given. Or—what the beggar much prefers—you may say that you have nothing less than a twenty-centime piece of nickel or a one-lira note, and he will fish up the exact change for you from the secrets of his spacious, well-filled pockets.

Of course the system of unblushing beggary would never answer among Teutons or Saxons or Scandinavians: among them people would take to it simply because it paid. Few Tuscans are so degraded as to take to it merely because it is profitable: beggars are composed of a small class of the generally unregenerate, of another small class who have lacked the moral grit to grapple with adversity, and of a large class that is physically so disabled as to be incapable of work. There is really no great harm in Tuscan

mendicancy : it keeps the workhouses emptier. People do not grudge their doit : it helps to keep down the rates and check municipal prodigality.

My favourite beggar is a person of unusual intelligence, who has the barefaced impudence to call himself "the poor idiot" (*il povero scemo*). Perhaps it is not so very barefaced after all, for with long practice and a rare skill he has acquired the make-up, gait, speech, and general deportment of a hopeless, drivelling imbecile, and that with an art so consummate that no practised actor could ever hope to touch him on his own ground. His walk alone must have taken a world of thinking out. He shuffles, of course, but in a series of serpentine curves that baffle description. He is on and off the pavement every half-second, always with the same meandering, tortuous, shuffling gait. Often you expect to see him knocked down by some wild careering cab, but a convolution occurs at the saving moment, and he grins from the gutter at the departing charioteer. His grin is, perhaps, the most effective feature of his stock-in-trade ; he grins idiotically all across his grimy visage, he grins with his eyes and with the lines about his eyes, he grins with his large nostrils and lop-ears, and with his wrinkled intellectual brow. Ordinarily he carries a rickety basket filled with meaningless billets and chips of wood ; at other times, slung over his



shoulder, a sooty sable sack, into the depths of which no man has ever penetrated or cared to spy. He munches much: a full mouth adds pertinency to his idiot mutterings, and imbecility to his multifold grin. In short, as he squats there, basking in the Tuscan sun, crooning his witless drivel, munching and mumbling and railing on Lady Fortune in set crazy terms, he seems the perfect portrait of a blinking idiot and lunatic lean-witted fool.

For a good full year I believed him to be a genuine addlepatte. One day his sense of humour threw him momentarily off his guard, and I discovered that he was really a creature with a more than ordinary stock of native mother-wit. I had rung the bell at my door and was waiting in the street for admittance, when the "poor idiot" gyrated down upon me with his snuffling, "Spare a centesimo for the poor idiot, signore!"

"Let us see," I said, feeling in my ticket-pocket, "whether I have anything for the poor blind man" (*cieco*). The mistake was inadvertent quite.

"Idiot, signore, idiot!" (*scemo*) he answered reproachfully, correcting me. And then I knew and saw for the first time that he was no idiot. I saw that he read and understood the look in my eyes, and I read and understood the look in his eyes, and saw to the full that he enjoyed the jest of preferring idiocy to blindness and of re-

proving me for attributing to him physical infirmity rather than mental.

"Why, thou rascal!" I cried, "thou'rt no idiot at all!"

"Ma sissignore, sissignore! I have ever been weak in the wits."

"Not a bit of it! 'Tis I who am the greater idiot for having thought thee a veritable imbecile all this long while!"

"Ma nossignore, no signoria! Indeed I am a bit deficient!"

"And I am the greater idiot," I continued, "for that I slave and work whilst thou enjoyest in full idleness the luxury of playing the fool!"

The "*povero scemo*" was hugely tickled, and grinned all over his foolish face. I gave him a piece of nickel to show him that I should not withdraw my patronage because he was no real idiot. Indeed I have since then much increased my alms for the sake of bandying words with this exquisite fool. But on our next meeting he had assumed again his skilfully contrived mask of imbecility, and he seldom lets it fall.

It is a delightful sensation to call a man an idiot and yet know all the while that you are paying him a compliment sweet to his ears and advantageous to his walk in life. We engage in a very subtly conceived badinage: I rail at imbecility in the full pride of my right wits, he with maudlin good-humour mocks at the fancied

boon of sanity. A "deep contemplative" fool, he affects to think my sanity as much an acquired art as his own idiocy, and much less well done. Hence it follows that I should have proved the better actor if I had essayed the rôle of shallow-brain instead of the staid, pharisaical part of rational sage. But all this is conveyed by looks and grins and a fatuous treatment of my questions; it is seldom that I catch him in the babbling mood, when he moralises on the times, apishly, but with sagacity and keen racy humour. He does not forget that he has a part to play, that I know too much already, that I may turn traitor and betray him, and take out of his mouth the bread that he contrives to earn by the want of his wits.

Of course the "*povero scemo*" is a very reprehensible person. I suppose him to be a creature with a more than ordinary loathing for manual labour, and with intellectual faculties that he has not known how to use for the want of instruction. Being able-bodied he could not long beg with success, if he were also *compos mentis*; and so to keep body and soul together in inglorious ease, he feigns to be diseased in his wits. This I take it is the true inner history of the unprincipled rascal; but who that for half a doit can revel with him in all the luxury of fine-drawn paradox would wish him clapped under the hatches of a workhouse or set to breaking stones upon

the road? Of an infinite cunning and natural good manners, he molests no man and conciliates the police, and in his begging he is unostentatious and free from all persistency. And so being at the same time irredeemable and harmless, it is surely better for the humbling of our pride that he should continue to sit on the doorsteps, railing at vainglorious sanity and mumbling the praises of despised imbecility.



## VIII

### THE VERY REV. CANON DOMENICO PUCCI, D.D.

(DOMESTIC PRELATE TO HIS HOLINESS)

I HAD told myself many a time that it was spend-thrift folly to travel first-class. I even asseverated continually the fatuous lie that second-class was quite as nice as first. But to-day, a fit of good conduct being upon me, I was firmly resolved to go second.

The *queue* at the ticket-office was long, my place in it very far back, the ticket-clerk, even for a Tuscan railway official, unusually slow. There were but five minutes to spare when I got to the window.

"A second single to Pistoia, please!" I said, wincing as with an effort I got out the objectionable word "second."

The ticket-clerk was grieved but polite. "I only distribute third-class tickets here, signore," he answered; "have the complacency to step to the adjoining window."

I glanced at the adjoining window. There

was another long *queue* there, another very deliberate clerk. If I took up my place at the end of the tail I should certainly miss the train. There was no time to hesitate, and so in despair I plunged, feeling very heroic indeed. "Then favour me," I said, "with a third single to Pistoia!"

But the prospect was not alluring. There are no padded third-class carriages on the Adriatic line. A number of hillmen back from the winter's work in Corsica were returning to their mountain homes above Pistoia. Each carried a large sack of unfragrant wearing apparel; some of them had dogs between their knees; all of them spades, hoes, rakes, walking-staves, great gourds, and a variety of impedimenta that littered the carriages across and across. It was near the dinner-hour too; the windows would be all tight shut, and, oh horror! garlic would be consumed, and its redolence would remain. I walked up and down the train anxiously spying into every carriage. Near the engine I noticed a compartment nearly empty, and I noticed, what decided me to enter, a priest in one corner of it, for the Tuscan peasant still respects the priest, and I felt he would be some sort of protection.

I got in and sat down opposite to him. He was deep in the Florence Ultramontane paper, the *Unità Cattolica*, but raised his eyes as I seated myself, and acknowledged my presence.

I bowed in return, but he was already back in his paper, so I had nothing better to do than to observe and study him. He was an old man, with close-cropped hair and the mildest pair of old eyes that I have ever seen. His forehead was low and narrowish, but the nose was large, aquiline, and finely cut, indicating intellect and a certain firmness of purpose. He was refined-looking to the finger-tips, nay, aristocratic, with the clear mark of old family stamped on his whole being. What struck me was the extreme neatness and cleanliness of his apparel. The white Roman collar and white cuffs were spotless, the steel buckles on his shoes shone brightly, the long black cassock with its myriad buttons, the broad-brimmed plush hat, seemed cared for and well brushed. A little bit of Roman purple silk, showing at the top of the cassock below the collar, agreeably set off the thin, white, wrinkled face. I could not help thinking what a pleasing picture he would make against the red velvet cushions of an Adriatic first-class compartment, and, priest though he was, how much more natural it would have been for such a refined gentleman to be there. I wished that we were both there. Also I wished to talk to him, but knew not how to begin.

Before we reached Pisa he neatly folded his paper and commenced to gaze out of the window in an upward direction, as if he were more con-

cerned with the things of Heaven than the beauties of the landscape. His thoughts were pleasant evidently; a faint smile played about the lips, and the whole face reflected a good conscience and a sanctified interior. Death might come and welcome—that, too, the face seemed to convey. The pale blue eyes, I saw, were milder and more beautiful than I had supposed; they spoke in the gentlest manner of clemency and illimitable loving-kindness. Yes, I really must get into conversation with him.

But there was no time, even if my unready tongue had found a suitable phrase, for he produced a big breviary and began to read in it earnestly, almost audibly, his lips moving the whole time. A pang of annoyance shot through me. I wanted more and more to talk to him. “You are reading that big book to impress me,” I said to myself, for it is the layman’s birthright to suspect every ecclesiastic of hypocrisy. “And you are moving your lips to impress me,” I went on. “Only it doesn’t. I should think more of you if you were less ostentatious.” Charitable thoughts truly, and how unjust I now know well enough. The Catholic Church obliges her priests to read the Canonical Hours every day, and the priest may not read the Office to himself; if not actually said aloud, he is at least obliged to form every word with his lips, and that alone was the



reason why the good man opposite me was moving his lips.

As the train lumbered into Lucca Station, the priest closed his book and crossed himself. Then he rose to leave us. From underneath the seat, willing hands preventing him, his bag was dragged forth, a real carpet bag with mauve roses on a black ground, and with a slight bow to me and a cheery *buona sera* and *buon viaggio* to the whole company, he alighted, and I saw him no more. Why did I not speak to him? If I had, what would his conversation have been like? If I had, I should have prevented him from the better entertainment of saying his Office. I went on musing about him for a while, but he passed out of my mind and thoughts altogether at the sight of the rich beauties of the Valley of the Nievole, which the train had now entered.

I returned home from Pistoia a fortnight later, and on the afternoon of the same day noticed an unusual stir in front of the Cathedral in the big piazza. The lintel of the main entrance was draped with black, silver-fringed hangings. A continual stream of people of all classes was passing in and out of the Cathedral. There was a hush upon them, and a look of concern in every face. What could be the matter, I wondered?

"What is the matter?" I asked of an old beggar-woman who was seated on the steps lustily beseeching the passing *buoni Cristiani* for alms.

"Do you not know, signore?" she replied. "The Canonico Pucci is dead!" A feeling groan escaped her lips.

"And who was the Canonico Pucci?" I inquired.

The woman looked up at me in amazement. "You are a stranger, signore, or you are rich. Otherwise you would know. He was the friend of the poor, a saint, a man of a great family, who stripped himself of everything for the poor. He was poorer than the poor for all that he looked such a great gentleman. We beggars took all we could get when he was rich, but for a long time we have hidden away when we saw him coming. He would give us his last *soldo*, and you dare not refuse—he was such a *gran signore*. But often he had not food to eat. He was a real saint, I tell you, and people have found it out now that he is dead. His body is lying in state in there. Go in and see; he looks such an angel, bless his dear face."

I dropped a coin into her hand and stood awhile under the portico, listening to the conversation of animated groups.

"What nonsense, I tell you! He rich! Why, the Canons of the Duomo get but four hundred

francs a year. They say there were but five *soldi* found in his room when he died."

"But he was of the family of the Counts Pucci of Prato, and he was a prelate of his Holiness."

"Maybe! But he was a prodigal, only he spent all his patrimony on the poor as you or I might do on pleasures. You couldn't trust him with money for himself. He had a hole in his hand, as the proverb says. He used to keep twenty families going out of the allowance his cousin the Count made him, and when the Count found out what he was doing, he stopped it. As for being a prelate of his Holiness, that brings you in no money. I tell you he was living on a franc and a half a day, and giving charity out of that!"

"But I have been in his comfortable sitting-room!" said another voice.

"Nonsense! that wasn't *his* sitting-room. He had but one room, a small bedroom with a little iron bedstead in it. The *padrona di casa* used to lend him her best sitting-room to receive people in. He was very proud, was the Canonico Pucci. He loved to be poor, but not to seem poor. He was a very fine gentleman, the Canonico; look how neat and bright his clothes always were."

"Well, the truth is coming out now. There were many who thought him rich."

"The poor knew well enough he wasn't."

"Nonsense, I tell you! The Sisters never paid him a halfpenny for his services as Chaplain to the Children's Hospital."

"The Sisters gave him a bit of carpet for his bedroom, but he sold it for the poor. The Mother Superior's just found it out."

"There'll be weeping and wailing among the children at the Spedalino to-day. They say he dearly loved the little ones."

"They say it was cancer he died of. And no one knew of it. He hadn't an arm-chair to sit in, or a bit of fire through the winter. And he should have been having good nourishing food. But you couldn't do anything for him—even the Sisters couldn't."

"He's lived poor, but he'll have the funeral of a Cardinal. All the Confraternities are coming, they say, and all the Orders and the parochial committees."

"Well, his soul's in Paradise, that's certain!"

My pulses stirred by this Hosanna of highest praise, I passed into the Cathedral. What an immense stream of people, to be sure! What excitement! What a number of poor and ragged creatures! They cannot keep silent. There is a hum of talk sounding irreverent in the sacred building, but being in reality only a hymn of praise. At the far end of the Cathedral I saw a tall, stately catafalque of black and gold, and underneath it, on a black draped bier, an open



coffin in which lay the body of an ecclesiastic. Six towering candlesticks with lighted candles stood round the catafalque. I neared it with difficulty. And then a pang gripped my heart and a mist came over my eyes. I might have guessed it surely from the disjointed talk I had heard a moment before. But I did not. It came as a surprise, a shock, and it left me with the heartache. There before me, clad in purple silk cassock and grey fur amess, the buckles on his shoes shining brightly in the flickering candle-light, a Divinity Doctor's biretta on his head, and a silver crucifix pressed in the thin hands clasped across his breast—there before me lay in the sweetest sleep of death the old priest with whom I had travelled in a third-class carriage little more than a fortnight before! I could not stop to gaze long at the sweet, placid face, to wonder what words would have come across the smiling lips had I spoken to him, to reproach myself for my hard thoughts of him: the constant stream carried me forcibly back to the door.

"There'll be a grand funeral to-night. Shall you go, Gianni?"

"Eh, *sfigo*! And you?"

"Eh! I should think so!"

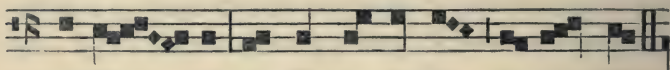
And so shall I, I resolved.

I got back to the Cathedral at eight o'clock. There was no getting in for the crowds. But I could look in, and I saw that the bishop himself,

in black cope and plain white mitre, was officiating. The coffin, still on the bier, was closed now, and covered with many garlands of flowers. There were wreaths, too, hanging on the four posts of the catafalque. Voices were chanting the *Libera*; the whole of the vast crowd took it up:—



Li - be - ra me, Do - mi - ne, de mor - te



æ - tér - na in di - e il - la tre - mén - da:



Quan - do cœ - li mo - vén - di sunt et ter - ra.



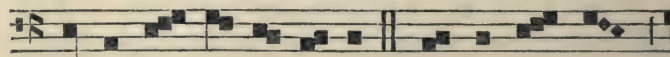
Dum vé . . . ne - ris ju - di - cá . . . .



. re sœ - culum per i - gnem. V. Tremens factus sum e - go



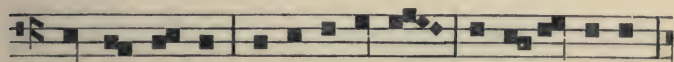
et ti - me - o, dum disscú - si - o vé - ne - rit,



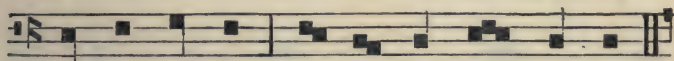
at - que ven - tú - ra i - ra. Quan - do cœ - li



mo - vén - di sunt et ter - ra. ¶. Di - es il - la,



di - es i - ræ, ca - la - mi - tá - tis et mi - sé - ri - æ,



di - es ma - gna et a - má - ra val - de.



Dum ve - - - ne - ris ju - di - cá - - - re,



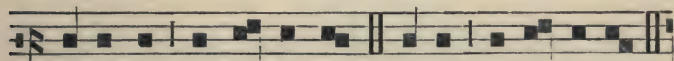
Sæ - cu - lum per i - gnem. Ré - qui - em æ - té - rnam.



do - na e - is, Dó - mi - ne: et lux per - pé - tu - a



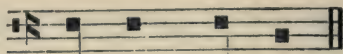
lu - ce - at e - is.



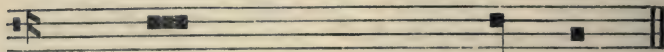
Ký - ri - e e - lé - i - son. Chri - ste e - lé - i - son.



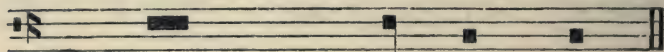
Ký - ri - e e - lé - i - son.



Pa - ter no - ster (*secreto*).



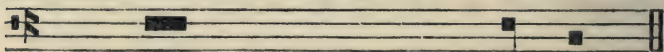
℣. Et ne nos inducas in tenta - tió - nem.  
℞. Sed libera nos a . . . ma - lo.



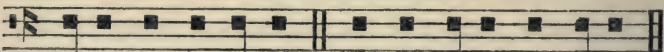
℣. A porta . . . in - fe - ri.  
℞. Erue, Domine, animam e - jus.



℣. Re - qui - e - scat in pa - ce. ℞. A - men.



℣. Dómine exaúdi orationem . . . me - am.  
℞. Et clamor meus ad te . . . vé - niat.

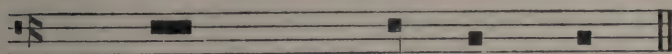


℣. Do-mi-nus vo-bis-cum. ℞. Et cum Spí-ri - tu tu-o.

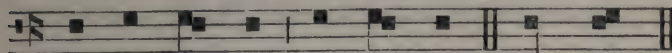
#### OREMUS.

Deus, cui proprium est misereri semper, et parcere : te supplices exoramus pro anima famuli tui Dominici Sacerdotis, quam hodie de hoc sæculo migrare jussisti, ut non tradas eam in manus inimici, neque obliviscaris in finem, sed jubeas eam a sanctis Angelis suscipi, et ad patriam paradisi perducere : ut quia in te speravit, et credidit, non pœnas inferni sustineat, sed gaudia æterna possideat. Per Christum Dominum Nostrum. R. Amen.





♯. Requiem æternam dona ei Do - mi - ne.  
 ♯. Et lux perpétua luceat e - i.



♯. Re - qui - e - scat in pa - ce. ♯. A - men.

It seemed needless to pray for the deliverance of a soul that must surely be already in Paradise.

The procession began to form, and the crowds poured out of the church. It was a wonderful procession. Children of several orphanages, Sisters of several Orders, the Sisters of St. Vincent of Paul from the Spedalino, with their big starched white caps; Brothers of the Archconfraternity of the Misericordia, in black linen gowns and black masks; Brothers of the Purification, with their broad white collars, all the parish confraternities, representatives of many Orders in their habits—Friars Minor, Capuchins, Dominicans, Crutched Friars, Augustinian Friars, Barnabites, and Vallombrosans from the monastery on the hill; a long file of the secular clergy, the priests from the Armenian and Greek Uniat Churches, the Maronite Chaplain, the Bishop and full Chapter of Canons, and closing the procession the state-hearse of the Misericordia, smothered in a profusion of flowers. Every man and woman in the long array carried a flaming torch or candle. Behind

the hearse there walked a multitude of the Canon's best friends—the blind, the maimed, the halt, the ragged and tattered, the scum and offscourings of the city, struggling for precedence. From the crowd which followed, and the crowds which lined the streets, there surged an uncomfortable sound of sobbing, which rose to loud-voiced, heart-piercing lamentations as the procession slowly defiled through the poorer quarters of the town. I followed to the city gates, where the procession broke up. All the streets of the city were animated with the returning crowds, and the hosanna of praise continued to swell on every side. It had indeed been an imposing demonstration, and all for a man who had never written a book, or made a speech, or done a single public act; who the day before had been unknown to half the city, whose fame was not of his seeking but the creation of the poor, whose only claim to public honours was that he had been beloved of the poor and had lived like one of them.

Blessed indeed is the holy land of Tuscany, where the love of poverty and its unostentatious practice is still a claim to public distinction, and where a simple love of the poor and an unfailing charity towards them is title sufficient to all the pomp and glory of a hero's funeral!

# THE TUSCAN TONGUE





## THE TUSCAN TONGUE

(AN ENTIRELY UNPHILOLOGICAL DISQUISITION)

THE Tuscan tongue is not easy of acquirement : rather is it very difficult. Only the man who does not know Italian, said the late Cardinal Manning, will call it an easy language. But the man entirely innocent of the language is not so cocksure as the man with a smattering. It is he, rather, who vaunts the easiness of Italian. He can get along "all right," he will tell you, and the people understand him. So they do, but it is thanks to their quick wit, their ready sympathy, their skill in reading the clumsiest pantomime, and by no means to his own linguistic attainments.

The Tuscan tongue is often, very falsely, called the Italian language. There is no Italian language, save in so far as Tuscan is an official and literary vehicle. Throughout the length and breadth of the kingdom an innumerable number of dialects are spoken, some attaining almost to the dignity of a language. It suffices to mention the Sardinian dialect, the Sicilian, the Neapolitan, the Bolognese, the Genoese, the Milanese, the

Piedmontese, the Venetian—even a Mezzofanti would quail before the countless divisions and subtly-shaded subdivisions—while outside the Kingdom of Italy, as now constituted, there are other Italic peoples speaking yet other Italic dialects—the patois of Nice and Corsica, the dialects of Ticino and Trent and Trieste. To illustrate more eloquently than any grammar could—Edmondo de Amicis, in the autobiography which he has commenced in the *Nuova Antologia*,<sup>1</sup> records that being transplanted at the age of two from a Genoese to a Piedmontese town, he began to acquire the dialect of his new residence more speedily than his elders, and at one time found himself unable to communicate with his mother except through an interpreter.

But Tuscan is the greatest of all the dialects, for it has taken rank in the Peninsula and the world as one of the classical languages. That which is commonly called the Italian language is in reality nothing but the Tuscan dialect, just as that which we call the Spanish language is only the dialect of the old kingdom of Castile. Dante six centuries ago wrote the Divine Comedy in the Tuscan dialect. Stupor and amazement at the great performance fell upon the whole Peninsula, and in the general admiration the master-mind gave a common literary speech to the divided Italian nationalities. It is not because Tuscan is

<sup>1</sup> *Nuova Antologia*, May, 16, 1900, fasc. 682, p. 194.

Tuscan, melodious, sonorous, stately, that it is now the Italian language, but because Dante wrote in the Tuscan dialect, and Petrarch followed hard after, singing sweet songs in the same provincial tongue. Had Dante been born not at Florence but in Venice and written in Venetian, had Petrarch been born not at Arezzo but in Naples and written in Neapolitan, there would have been two classical languages in Italy to-day, just as there are two classical languages, Spanish and Portuguese, in the Iberian Peninsula; or if the imaginary Dante's greater influence had prevailed, the modern Italian language would have been the Venetian dialect, not the Tuscan.

And yet the great master's influence was limited. He gave a common speech to Italians, but it was only very partially accepted. It is the language of press and Parliament, of poets and writers, of universities and the schools; it is, of course, the spoken language of Tuscany; all the educated classes of other parts of Italy *can* speak it, though, always excepting Rome, they never do among themselves. The untravelled Englishman is apt to imagine that Italian, that is to say, Tuscan, is the everyday spoken language of all Italians among themselves right throughout the Peninsula. Such is very far from being the case. Go on to the Exchange at Milan, and listen to a group of phlegmatic Lombard 'changers: not a word of their discourse penetrates your intelli-

gence, however good a Tuscan scholar you may be. Go to a barber's in Bologna: five or six customers are waiting to be shaved, and are loudly discoursing; fair Tuscany lies close, just beyond the hills; and yet you seem to have discovered a country not marked upon the map, to have unearthed a language not tabulated by philologists, so barbarous, so outlandish is the jargon you hear. You land at Genoa, but when the boatman opens his mouth a fear comes upon you that this can be no Italian port, so unintelligible are the sounds which he is uttering. Or you stroll into the theatre at Venice to hear Zago in the classic Goldoni's "Sior Todero Brontolon," and although you understand some of it, the Italian appears to have gone all wrong, for the play is writ in the Venetian dialect.

As for the country dialects outside Tuscany, a mountain, a hedge, a running brook, as Sant' Albino says, is sufficient to mark off a new language. This is no exaggeration. The late Signor Giovanni Papanti,<sup>1</sup> in honour of the fifth century of Boccaccio, published a volume containing one of the stories of the "Decameron," translated into about seven hundred different dialects and *verna-*

<sup>1</sup> Signor Papanti was by profession a shipbroker, but philologists owe more than one debt of gratitude to him. The book from which I am quoting is entitled, "I parlari in Certaldo alla festa del V Centenario di Messer Giovanni Boccaccio. Omaggio di Giovanni Papanti." Livorno, 1875, pp. 736. Signor Papanti obtained all his translations locally.



*coli*, or shades of dialect. The differences are bewilderingly astounding. Let us take the first word only of the story (*dico*—I say—a very common word), and see how it compares in some of the principal dialects :—

Italian or Tuscan	. . . . .	<i>Dico</i>
Venetian	. . . . .	<i>Digo</i>
Milanese	. . . . .	<i>Disi</i>
Piedmontese	. . . . .	<i>Dio</i>
Sardinian (Sassari)	. . . . .	<i>Diggu</i>
Sicilian	. . . . .	<i>Dicu</i>
Bolognese	. . . . .	<i>A degh</i>
Genoese	. . . . .	<i>Diggo</i>

But this is not all. Each dialect is subdivided into an infinity of *vernacoli*. Take the Piedmontese dialect, and again keeping to the simple first word of Boccaccio's story, let us, with the help of Signor Papanti's book, compare the dialect with a few only of its many *vernacoli* :—

Piedmontese Dialect . . . . . *Io dio*

*Piedmontese Vernacoli :*

Country round Turin	. . . . .	<i>Io digh</i>
Valperga (Canavese)	. . . . .	<i>E diso</i>
Vico Canavese	. . . . .	<i>I diou</i>
Monferrato	. . . . .	<i>Ä dic</i>
Gavi	. . . . .	<i>A digu</i>
Alba (town)	. . . . .	<i>Mi dijo</i>
Alba (country districts)	. . . . .	<i>Mi digu</i>
Saluzzo (country districts)	. . . . .	<i>Iv disiis</i>
Bagnasco	. . . . .	<i>I disio</i>
Cortemiglia	. . . . .	<i>Mi dich</i>
Mondovì	. . . . .	<i>Mi diva</i>

Nay, even in Tuscany itself but little pure Tuscan is spoken by the people. Even in Tuscany there is an infinity of *vernacoli*. A Florentine aristocrat can tell you in which ward of the city lives the *popolano* with whom he is talking; an Elban shipowner can state at once from which of the island villages his sailors come. In Leghorn it is most easy to distinguish the people who live in that part of the city known (on account of its canals) as Venezia. There the people, among many peculiarities, substitute "l" for "r," and "r" for "l," just as a London flunkey drops an "h" or puts on an "h" when he shouldn't. For instance, the Livornese Veneziani say "Galibardi" for "Garibaldi," "dorce fal niente" for "dolce far niente," "fa cardo" for "fa caldo," "Tulco" for "Turco," and so forth. Out of the whole of the seven hundred translations in Signor Papanti's work, the one that most faithfully resembles the pure Tuscan of Boccaccio's day is that representing the peasant language of the Pistoiese Apennines. It is here, round about San Marcello and Cutigliano, that the purest Tuscan is spoken, pure in its language, pure in its accent; and it is here that Manzoni and d'Azeglio came, comparative foreigners both of them, the one a Lombard the other a Piedmontese, to acquire the pure language for those romances which have delighted all Italy and all the world.

Italy is the land of surprises. Strange it is that unity should have come to her from Piedmont, the least Italian of all the Italic Provinces, and that her dynasty hails from still further afield, from transalpine Savoy, the land which has produced Joseph de Maistre, greatest of all French stylists, and St. Francis of Sales, whose sweet mellifluous tongue laid the foundation of French spiritual writing. So recently as 1821 De Maistre, writing from Turin to the Marquis d'Azeglio, asks if indeed the Torinese be Italians, and says that at Florence they are called an "amphibious nation," while at Turin (afterwards to become the capital of the Kingdom of Italy) it was the habit to inquire whether the post from *Italy* had arrived yet.<sup>1</sup> Down to 1859 the language spoken in the Turin Parliament was French; it was the language of the Court, of society, of diplomacy, of the Sardinian Foreign Office, of many newspapers, and Count Solaro della Margarita, Charles Albert's foreign minister, used as often as not to sign himself "Solar de la Marguerite."

Then there is the question of accent, and here occurs just one of those surprises so peculiarly Italian. The best language is spoken in Tuscany, but the best pronunciation is heard in Rome, according to the old proverb which describes the ideal, *lingua Toscana in bocca*

<sup>1</sup> *Œuvres Complètes* (Lyons, 1886), vol. xiv. p. 259.

*Romana*.<sup>1</sup> The Roman pronunciation is less harsh than the Tuscan, it is more melodious and sonorous, it has no savour of provincialisms. In the mouth of a noble Roman, Tuscan attains the most delectable sounds of which human speech is capable, and becomes a fitting language for the City which is the centre of the Universe. The noble Roman has, moreover, a great facility in languages, and speaks them all—even French—with little or no ungrateful accent, whereas the Tuscan in general is not over quick at acquiring a foreign tongue, while his accent, when he speaks French, might cause a Londoner to take heart of grace. But Italians on the whole speak English remarkably well, and it is quite wonderful to hear Florentines and Romans who have never been in England using our most idiomatic expressions and sonorously rolling forth our very latest slang.

All the other Italian nationalities, except the Romans and the Tuscans, speak Italian with a strongly marked foreign accent. In the Neapolitans and the Venetians this accent is agreeable; in the Milanese, the Genoese, the Bolognese, harsh and repellent. Of course, if they are educated people, they speak their Tuscan correctly as far as the language goes, and in

<sup>1</sup> There is another proverb which narrows the ideal still more, *lingua Sanese in bocca Pistoiese*—the speech of Siena and the accent of Pistoia.



that are to be distinguished from the foreigner, blundering usually notwithstanding his twenty years' residence; but even correctness of speech cannot soften to a Tuscan ear the grating drawl of the Bolognese, and perhaps he prefers the blundering and floundering of the obvious foreigner.

But I had almost forgot that this chapter is on the Tuscan tongue, and not on the Italic dialects. Tuscan is an absolutely delightful language. It is so specially adapted for asking big favours, for humbly returning thanks for them, for excusing deficiencies, for evading the point, for a sustained and subtle badinage, and—above all—for making love. There is that in it which makes all compliments seem sincere, which magnifies all excellencies, and softens all defects. On every letter you get you are dubbed a Sir Most Illustrious, Most Highly Esteemed, Most Worthy or Most Distinguished. Frequently an exalted military rank is accorded you, or a title of nobility of which you have never seen the patent, while it is always assumed that you are at least a Knight Commander of some Illustrious Order of Chivalry. Nay, at times, even the grateful title of "Excellency" delights your eye upon a soiled and illiterate envelope which contains within it an astounding catalogue of all the virtues which you have not, and appeals, without fear of failing, to that "buon cuore" of yours, the subject of

universal marvel, for a trifling alms to succour the widow whose husband is still living, or the orphan who has lost neither parent.

Then it is a language which wonderfully tends to sharpen the wits. It insists upon your defining the social station, and, to some extent, the character of every man you address. This is a great strain upon the luckless stranger, and it is well for him that the Tuscans are especially indulgent to foreigners. From baronet to plough-boy, in England, we are all "you." Not so in Tuscany. There there are three modes of address. First there is *Lei*, and that, with the persistent contrariness of all things Tuscan, is a violation of the rules of grammar. *Lei* is genitive and dative, and yet it is used as the nominative in speaking, and the real nominative (*Ella*) is only used in writing.<sup>1</sup> And *Lei* is not "you" or "thou," not even "he": it is plain "she." So in a sonorous, robust and bellicose language, one has to unsex the most virile and belligerent, and call every male "her." *Lei* (she), then, is one mode of address; *Voi* (you) is another; *Tu* (thou) is the third; and thus all humanity is divided into *Lei*, *Voi*, and *Tu*.

But how to classify? There's the rub. It is most difficult when you get near the borderland which separates *Lei* from *Voi*, and *Voi* from *Tu*.

<sup>1</sup> To great swells (*pezzi grossi*), and on very formal occasions, *Ella* may be used in speech, but it is not conversational language.

*Lei* is given to such of one's superiors as are not addressed by some more exalted title (Majesties, Eminences, Royal Highnesses, Excellencies); to one's equals; to some of one's inferiors, such as clerks and the swarming crowd of Government *impiegati*, petty officers, and the better class of shopkeepers. *Voi*, the usual mode of address at Naples, is but little employed in Tuscany. It is given to Almighty God, to the Blessed Virgin, and to the Saints and Angels. Children, in old-fashioned, remote country districts use it as a mark of respect to their parents. And it serves more potently than the whole repertory of Tuscan strong language to reduce a Tuscan servant, whose heart you delight with the familiar and confidential *Tu*, to a proper sense of her awful and reprehensible misdeeds. *Tu*, the sweet, delightful, logical, affectionate *Tu*, you will give to your servants if you like them, to all peasant people as a rule, to your cabman, your gardener, your boatman, to the tram-conductor who pilots you into town, to the waiter of the restaurant where you lunch if his eye is bright and genial, to your barber's assistant if he seem no formalist, to the dispenser of your morning vermouth if you feel in sympathy with him, and to all and sundry the beggars whom you may honour with your acquaintance and conversation. But roughly speaking, all Tuscans are divided into *Lei* and *Tu*, and the great art consists in

knowing precisely where *Lei* leaves off and *Tu* begins.

Very hard, too, upon the poor foreigner is the bewildering number of suffixes by which one may change the sense of both nouns and adjectives for better or for worse in all the nicest grades of good and bad. Just a few of these suffixes : *one*, *otto*, if you desire to magnify (*donna*, a woman, *donnone*, an imposingly big woman); *ino*, *cino*, *etto*, *ello*, and how many more, if you want to be endearing (*donnetta*, a dear little woman); *accio*, and *astro* to express a sense of evil (*donnaccia*, a bad woman, a baggage; *filosofastro*, a false, shall I say an empiric, philosopher). The foreigner, if he is wise, will not attempt to learn his *accrescitivi*, *diminutivi*, *vezzeggiativi*, and *peggiorativi* from a grammar. He will rather trust to time, ear, and observation. With time the use of a few of these suffixes will become familiar to him; as to the rest, the plain Anglo-Saxon has no need of them, or will blunder if he attempt to apply them; in their full fitness and significance they can only be used by the natives whose subtle and complex characters have impressed them on the language. Just think of it : *Beppino* means primarily little Beppe, but it can also mean big Beppe. If big Beppe be too muscular and strong, if he be likely to prove dangerous and tyrannical in his village or slum, his claws are clipped for him in early boyhood by simply being



dubbed Beppino, or dear, gentle, harmless, little Beppe. Samson himself could never have used his great strength, if from his earliest days he had been soothed with the honeyed sobriquet of *Sansonino*.

And what shall I say of *uccio*, which my grammar tells me expresses "diminution coupled with baseness and disdain." So it does ; but it may go along with size too, and seek to cover baseness and hide disdain. I will take a Beppuccio of my acquaintance. He is a ship-chandler's man, indefatigable, and a very reliable messenger, will do an errand without hope of reward, has most of the qualities of good-nature, but is uninviting in his appearance, ill-clad and not over clean, bibulous and pimply as to the face, reeks of raw garlic and the chandler's store, shambles in his gait and splutters in his speech, and—unpardonable crime in Tuscany—frequently gets tipsy for days together on rum below proof that hails from the Baltic. Such is Beppuccio, and his *uccio* does apply to his stature, it does indicate his baseness, it does express the general disdain ; it does all this, but it does more than this, for to him it has been given as a sign that the virtues he has do to some extent condone his most manifest shortcomings, that his fellow-citizens have agreed to overlook his worst features, that in fact he is Beppuccio, whereas justice untempered by mercy would have pointed him out to the universal scorn as Beppaccio, or

the Bad Beppe. Thus a suffix which in another might express something like contempt (*sprezzativo*) becomes in him a sign of exculpation, almost a term of endearment. An alert observation of human sympathies and human passions, a keen eye to the rough but just judgments of popular opinion, will carry you far deeper into the mysteries and complexities of the Tuscan tongue, than a mastery of all the rules of syntax or the expenditure of much midnight oil over the tomes of the *Accademici della Crusca*.

But a great impediment to acquiring Tuscan is the cleverness, and especially the courtesy of the Tuscans themselves. They read your wants without any need of speech, and if you make a mistake are even capable of adopting it for the sake of saving your feelings. One of the first happy thoughts of the beginner is to Italianise French words. It answers so often. He knows to begin with that if he changes the French *eau* into *ello* (*agneau, agnello*), or the French *eur* into *ore* (*vapleur, vapore*), he will probably be right. He is tempted to soar beyond these ascertained rules, *garçon, garzone; jardin, giardino; hier, ieri; jamais, giammai*; how smoothly the system works. He goes into a *pizzicheria* and asks the price of *jambon, giambone*, pointing to a small juicy ham of the Casentino cure. "Questo giambone," says the courteous shopman, "costa novanta centesimi la libbra." The ham is bought

on the spot and sent home. The cook is asked what she thinks of the *giambone*? "The what!" she asks in bewildered astonishment. "The *giambone* which I myself sent home from the *pizzicheria*." "Ah!" she gasps apologetically, "it is excellent *giambone*! Will the signore have some of it fried with eggs after the manner of the Americans?" And so, thanks to an infamous conspiracy of courtesy between a shopman, a cook, a parlour-maid, and a serving-man, it was six months before I found out that there was no such word in the Tuscan tongue as *giambone*, and that the Italian for ham was *prosciutto*!

Worse things befell a beginner of my acquaintance who had the bad habit of Italianising English words. It was the occasion of his first experiment at five o'clock tea, and he ordered cream, *crema*. "Shall I put it in the large glass dish, signore?" inquired the parlour-maid. "No, woman," he answered brusquely; "put it in the proper place; put it in the silver jug!" It is the Tuscan habit to obey without question. "*Come vuole Lei, signore*," replied the maid submissively. When his guests were assembled and tea was brought in, he discovered a thick yellow substance in the cream-jug. He smelt it, and set down the jug with an exclamation of despair. It was rather hard, too, that there should have been no milk in the house and no cow within a mile. He knows now that the

Italian for cream is *panna*, and that the Italian for custard is *crema*!

Beautiful as is the Tuscan tongue, delightful as it is to hear, delightful as it is to speak, it is heavy and tough in the reading. Many of the Italian classics—excepting always in their letters (Bembo, Ganganelli, Leopardi)—are tough and heavy. Machiavelli is heavy, Tiraboschi is heavier, Guicciardini stupendously ponderous. Dante is a superlative genius, but his locofocoisms are difficult of digestion. Besides, Dante is overdone and overquoted until flesh and blood rebel. Tuscan is a splendid language for all verse, but it turns to heaviness in a narrative form. Still all fourteenth-century Tuscan is beautiful and even light; it is the “*buon secolo*,” the “*aureo secolo*”; and even its narratives are full of exquisite charm. The first reading of the *Fioretti* has been an epoch to many, not only because of the charm of the subject, but as a revelation in style. Tuscan is a fine theological language too, and knows how to carry home the reasonableness of revealed religion better even than French. It is at its best perhaps in purely spiritual works (Cavalca, Passavanti, St. Catherine, Lorenzo Scupoli), and I confess to a weakness for the homely and very unclassical language of St. Alphonsus Liguori and St. Leonard of Port Maurice.



Italy is the land of sermons, but delightful as it is to hear a sermon, where is the Italian sermon you could read? Where is the Italian Bossuet, or Fénelon, or Bourdaloue, or even the Italian Ravignan or Lacordaire? It is most true, as the Count de Maistre has said, that Italy, religious as she is and mistress of a sonorous language, has never yet produced a sermon which Europe has cared to *read*. Here and there, perhaps, people of the old school still rank Paolo Segneri's sermons among the classics, but they are nigh forgotten outside Italy. The great popularity of Padre Agostino da Montefeltro has engendered numerous and cheap editions of his sermons, but in the reading they lose all the charm of his splendid preaching, and have no claims whatever to immortality.

Still the toughest of the Italian classics, nay the most ponderous Italian historic narrative, is exciting reading beside the modern, *fin-de-siècle*, realistic Italian novel with a purpose, and it is by a merciful dispensation of Providence that this beautiful and noble language will not lend itself to any effective prostitution of literary ability in fiction. The vogue for a novelist like D'Annunzio must soon pass; the reaction has set in already, and I hope that with the change he may put his fine abilities to a better use. Such fiction as is good in Italian is wholesome

and historic (Manzoni, D'Azeglio, Cantù). Journalistic Italian in the form of a leader comes lowest of all in the scale for dullness and general unreadableness, but a Tuscan newspaper is redeemed by the naïve anecdotal and incidental vein that runs through its "Cronaca della Città."

One of the reasons why the Italian classics seem to walk upon stilts is the past tyranny of the great Accademia della Crusca. The terror with which the Academy inspired Italian writers seems to us ludicrous in these days. But even as I write thus bravely I confess that a certain dread of the old Olympian thunderbolts comes over me. If the Academy had but command of the common hangman as in days gone by, I fear they would cause this disquisition, entirely unphilological as it is, to be burned at his hands as they burned in 1717 the "Vocabolario Cateriniano" of poor Girolamo Gigli, the adventurous Sienese who had dared to dispute their sacred canons. It was a handful of Cruscanti who helped to drive poor Tasso out of his wits, and caused him to re-write the "Gerusalemme Liberata" in the form of that melancholy MS. preserved at Vienna, the "Gerusalemme Conquistata." For fear of the Academy the historian Botta (a very heavy scribe, by the way) dare not call a gun a gun, but calls it an arquebus (*archibugio*). The Cruscanti fell foul

of Manzoni too, and he re-wrote (and perhaps improved) the "Promessi Sposi." Tasso was a Neapolitan, Botta a Piedmontese, and Manzoni a Lombard. The Academicians hold Leopardi's view that the Tuscan people is the "maestro unico e specchio di quel divino parlare, di cui l'Accademia è conservatrice," and they are always especially severe on non-Tuscans. In 1876 a hot-headed Romagnol, Alfonso Cerquetti, Professor of Italian Literature at Forlì, had the hardihood to publish a pamphlet pointing out errors (*sic*) in the new Vocabolario of the Academy.<sup>1</sup> Errors! And in the sacrosanct Vocabolario of our thrice sacrosanct Accademia! The philological teacup was shaken to the foundations, and came nigh splitting in the storm. Recriminations flew thick and fast. Cerquetti retorted bravely, but used strong language.<sup>2</sup> Two of the Academicians, Cesare Guasti, the Secretary, and Giovanni Tortoli, a notable compiler, brought an action against him for defamation. The Civil and Correctional Tribunal of Milan awarded them two livres damages each, and so the moral victory rested with Cerquetti.

<sup>1</sup> "Agli Errori del Vocabolario della Crusca," Turin, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Guasti he called "a barefaced charlatan," and said of him "he lies while knowing that he lies," and other the like philological amenities. Guasti had previously described his adversary as "un tal dalle Marche," the concentrated satire of which is quite untranslatable.

I would not for a moment have it supposed that the Crusca has not rendered incalculable services to literature and the language. It was the first Academy in the world to compile a dictionary of a modern language (1611). The fifth edition of the great dictionary, now in course of compilation, is a marvellous monument of minute learning and patient research. The Cruscanti work slowly. The first part of the new Vocabolario appeared in 1863; in 1900 they have completed the letter I.<sup>1</sup> (Dr. Murray's Dictionary, begun in 1884, has already reached Glass-Graded.) And note the fine and rather commendable arrogance of the title-page—the Vocabolario is not of the Italian language, or of the Tuscan tongue; its title-page gives no hint of the language dealt with; it is not even called the Dictionary of the Academy of the Crusca; it is simply the Dictionary of the *Accademicians* of the Crusca! (Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca).

Something too much of this disjointed gossip. I must bid farewell for the present to the Tuscan tongue. English and German are more lyrical languages far; French is a far finer vehicle of prose;

<sup>1</sup> Professor Cerquetti's counsel declared in his defence that the Vocabolario at the rate it was proceeding would not be finished until 1992, having cost the State 627,000,000 livres and ninety centimes, allowing for compound interest! The Accademia receives an allowance of 42,000 livres a year from the State.



but Tuscan is certainly the most charming of all for conversation and everyday intercourse. It reflects more clearly than any other the character of the people who are speaking to you. Only think of it: one of their habitual expressions is "pazienza!" and there is no other country in the world that uses it. When the beggar is denied an alms, when rough weather keeps the fisherman at home, when hail destroys the contadino's crops and the phylloxera his vines, when the cabman fails to get a fare or the boatman a pleasure party, when any request is brusquely refused, when, in fact, the Tuscan cannot get what he wants or do as he lists, his ordinary expression is "pazienza!" "Pazienza!" sweetest sound in the whole language; "pazienza!" you may hear it on all sides of you; "pazienza!" it fills the streets and permeates the slums and abides in the village hovels; "pazienza!" it rings out cheerily aboard ship and in the conscript barracks, and still more cheerily in prison and hospital and workhouse. "Pazienza!" this one little word, uttered as the matter-of-course view of life, does more to prove what others have sought to show in treatises, that the quiddity, quintessence, and, as I may say, first ground and principle of the Christian religion, has permeated more thoroughly the mere hinds of this people than even the elect of the Great Powers of the World!

Honour, then, to the Tuscan tongue, that in the course of a mere philological study teaches us to love, almost inspires us to practise, all the virtues that bid a welcome to adversity, and all the courage that mocks at dull Care.

TUSCAN TOWNS







A LEVANTINE TRADER



THE MAJESTY OF THE LAW



WATER FROM THE PUBLIC FOUNTS



TWO POLICEMEN (New Uniform)



WHAT DELAYS THE LETTERS



CORAL GIRLS

TYPICAL SCENES IN LEGHORN

*Photographs by Dr. PIETRO ROSSINI*





LEGHORN

# I

## LEGHORN

PEOPLE do not come to Leghorn. Why should they? They go to Italy as travellers and sight-seers; and Baedeker has told them that Leghorn "contains little to detain the traveller," and Mr. Hare has said that "there is nothing whatever worth seeing at Leghorn." These words were written for travellers, and to them they may be true, but there is much in Leghorn to make the traveller cease from travelling and take his rest for ever in this city by the Tyrrhenian Sea.

Leghorn is an instance—the only instance perhaps—of a large Italian city wholly untouched by the influence and imported requirements of the tourist: that is its pre-eminent charm. Modern

foreign influences are confined to obscure quarters of the town, where the mercantile marine of all nations drinks bad rum (humorously called *ponce*, punch), swears, quarrels, disgraces its flag, outrages Tuscan courtesy, and occasionally gets stuck. But more ancient foreign influences are very conspicuous, and in no city of Italy is there less Italian *pur sang*. It pleased Ferdinand de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, at the close of the sixteenth century, to erect the Castle and swampy village of Livorno into a refuge for the destitute of all nations. Catholics from England, Huguenots from France, Mahometan Moors from Christian Spain, Christian Moors from Mahometan Barbary, Corsicans loathing the Genoese yoke, Flemings fleeing before Alva, and Jews from the four cardinal points of the globe, flocked thither in numbers. To the Jews especially Ferdinand I. showed great favour: a charter of large liberties, called the *Livornina*, was granted them, and there was a popular saying in those days, that you had as lief assault the Grand Duke himself as lay a finger on a Jew.

All these cosmopolitan influences survive conspicuously in the present day. The Leghorn Directory is full of names—German, English, Scotch, Swiss, Greek, Arabic, Armenian, Hebrew—that dislocate the straightly-set Italian jaw. The best index to the cosmopolitan character of



the city is a list of its churches. There is an English Church, of course, and a Scotch Free Kirk and Sailors' Bethel, a Waldensian Conventicle and an Italian Ebenezer, a Dutch Church (for Germans, Swiss, Scandinavians, and Huguenots), a Greek Uniat Church and a Greek Orthodox Church, an Armenian Uniat Church, a Maronite Chapel, and a monster Synagogue, one of the largest in the world. Nay, even the Salvation Army has found its way to Leghorn, and at first startled the local police by offering for sale in the streets an Italian paper with the fear-inspiring title of "*Il Grido di Guerra!*"

There was once a British "Factory" in Leghorn, levying taxes on the shipping that entered the port, and a very powerful and wealthy community it was. It ceased to exist in 1825 when Canning was at the Foreign Office, and since then the British Mercantile colony has slowly declined. Englishmen are only to be found as settlers abroad where money is plentifully to be made; the palmy days when Leghorn was an Emporium and a free port are over, and the English have departed with her glory.

One of the most interesting corners of the town is the old British Cemetery in the *Via degli Elisi*. No record of its foundation exists, but there is said to be (I cannot find it) at least one tomb

that goes back to 1594, almost to the year when Ferdinand raised Leghorn to the dignity of city. Tombs of the seventeenth century are plentiful. For a long time it was the only English, indeed I fancy the only Protestant, burying-ground in Italy. Smollett is buried here; so is Francis Horner ("distinguished for his splendid talents and spotless integrity"), and William Henry Lambton, Esquire, M.P. for Durham, who died at Pisa on the 30th November 1797 "universally respected and beloved; he was able as a statesman, and exemplary in all the relations of life as a husband, father, master, and friend." Here, too, lie the mortal remains of Anna, Countess Cowper (died 1826), Margaret Rolle, Countess of Orford and Baroness Clinton in her own right (died 1781), and many scions of our best families—Lockharts of Carnwath, Murrays of Broughton, Ross's of Bladensburg, Lubbocks, Mountney Jephsons, Chads, Macleans, Kempthorpes, Stopfords, Gwillyms, &c. &c. There was nowhere else where they could be buried, and the famous winter resort of Pisa yielded many bodies of consumptive Englishmen to this old cemetery. If Shelley's body had not been burned on the shores of the Duchy of Lucca, it is likely enough that his remains would have found their last resting-place here.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. G. Milner-Gibson-Cullum, F.S.A., and the late Mr. Francis Macauley of Florence, copied all the inscriptions in this



*Photograph by*

*BETTINI, Leghorn*

ENTRANCE TO THE OLD BRITISH CEMETERY, LEGHORN

*To face p. 124*





The cemetery is in a state of neglect and disrepair, but it must be owned that this neglect greatly heightens its picturesque appearance. A row of stately cypresses surrounds it, and within, myrtles, stone-pines, yews, huge bushes of monthly roses, and even an occasional eucalyptus, grow as Mother Nature lists, innocent of any gardener's care, whilst a luxuriant jungle of periwinkles, irises, wild violets, and stinging nettles threatens to cover the graves, and strong ivy and other hardy parasites creep insidiously within the junctures of the marble tombs and are gradually splitting them to pieces.<sup>1</sup>

The old cemetery was closed by Grand Ducal order in 1839 when the bounds of the city were enlarged, and the energetic British colony purchased land further afield, and constructed another burying-ground. A comparison between the two cemeteries is an instructive object-lesson in the great change that has come over English religious belief in the last half-century. The old cemetery is full of urns and sarcophagi, broken pillars, hour-glasses, inverted torches, skulls and cross-bones, lyres and laurel wreaths, medallions of prosperous bag-wigged traders, chubby cherubs convulsed

interesting old cemetery. Their publication was commenced in the *Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica* for September 1896, and has not yet been finished.

<sup>1</sup> Such was the cemetery as I first knew it, but since this was written the present incumbent, the Rev. E. L. Gardner, has, of his own initiative, commenced to restore this waste wilderness to something like order and seemliness.

with grief, and allegorical female figures veiling their sorrow, but of the cross, the emblem of Christianity, there is not a solitary instance, whereas in the new cemetery crosses abound and are invariable in all the later tombs. There is one cross, though, connected with the old cemetery which has much more significance than a simple cross, or even a crucifix. In 1746 Mr. Robert Bateman, a wealthy merchant, surrounded the cemetery with a wall and iron railing at his sole cost. Over the gate is a small voided iron cross; in the centre of the cross is a rounded disc, and from the disc issue rays of glory. The disc represents the Sacramental Wafer, and it is placed on a cross to illustrate the Catholic doctrine that the Blessed Sacrament is Our Lord Himself. What would have been the feelings of the steady-going, plain-thinking merchants of the British Factory had they known that the cross over their cemetery was preaching and teaching, to those who had eyes to see, the extremest form of the Real Presence in the Sacrament. But oh! the whirligig of time! This cross, and the doctrine it symbolises, would be devoutly accepted by the entire congregation of many a modern Anglican Church in London!

I have said that Smollett is buried in the old cemetery. There is at least, surrounded by an iron railing, a column there erected

to his memory. The inscription on it runs as follows:—

MEMORIÆ  
TOBIÆ SMOLLETT  
QUI LIBURNI  
ANIMAM EFFLAVIT  
16 SEPT. 1773, QUIDAM  
EX SUIS VALDE AMICIS  
CIVIBUS  
HUNC TUMULUM  
FECERUNT.<sup>1</sup>

Captain Buchan Telfer, R.N., has endeavoured to prove that Smollett is not buried here. It is true that the date of death on the memorial column is incorrect: Smollett beyond a doubt died on the 17th September 1771, and not on the 16th September 1773. But the memorial column may have been placed on the grave a number of years after the death. We know that Smollett was attended in his last illness by Thomas Garden, physician to the British Factory, and by Dr. Giovanni Gentili, a Leghorn doctor, and therefore until better evidence to the contrary is forthcoming, it seems to me safe to accept the old tradition, both that he is buried in the British cemetery in the spot marked by the memorial, and that he died in the Villa

<sup>1</sup> The word "civibus" has been added after the completion of the inscription. It has been most obviously squeezed in as an afterthought, no doubt with the object of showing that there were no foreigners among these "valde amici."

Gamba at Antignano near Leghorn, and there wrote the "Expedition of Humphrey Clinker."<sup>1</sup>

Opposite the entrance to the old cemetery is the English Church of St. George the Martyr, erected in 1838-1840 by special permission of Leopold II., Grand Duke of Tuscany. Before this, the English Church services had to be conducted in buildings that were not permitted to have the semblance of a church. The new privilege was limited to the Anglican Church among foreign bodies. The Scotch Free Church and Manse, which was built soon afterwards in the same street, has only the appearance of a Gothic mansion.

There is another place of pilgrimage in Leghorn which some Englishmen will still care to visit—the Villa Valsovano, where in the summer of 1819 Shelley wrote the greater part of the "Cenci." "Our villa," says Mrs. Shelley, "was situated in the midst of a *podere*; the peasants sang as they worked beneath our windows during the heats of a very hot summer, and at night the water-wheel creaked as the process of irrigation went on, and the fire-flies flashed from among the hedges:—nature was bright, sunshiny, and cheerful, or diversified by storms of a majestic terror such as we had never before witnessed. At the top of the house there was a sort of terrace.

<sup>1</sup> See the whole controversy in *Notes and Queries*, 9th Series, vol. i. pp. 201, 309, and 510.



There is often such in Italy, generally roofed. This one was very small, yet not only roofed, but glazed: this Shelley made his study; it looked out on a wide prospect of fertile country, and commanded a view of the near sea. The storms that sometimes varied our day showed themselves most picturesquely as they were driven across the ocean; sometimes the dark, lurid clouds dipped towards the waves and became waterspouts that churned up the waters beneath as they were chased onward and scattered by the tempest. At other times the dazzling sunlight and heat made it almost intolerable to every other, but Shelley basked in both, and his health and spirits revived under their influence. In this airy cell he wrote the principal part of the "Cenci."<sup>1</sup>

I have visited the Villa Valsovano, which is situated at the end of the Via del Fagiano, just within the Municipal wall: in Shelley's day it was far outside the town. The present proprietor courteously permitted me to ascend to the "airy cell." The small terrace still exists, but is no longer either roofed or glazed. The "wide prospect of fertile country" survives in undiminished glory. In the garden of the villa is a picturesque arbour formed by artificially training the branches of a stout elm-tree. This sheltered nook was also used by Shelley as a study. It was in the lanes

<sup>1</sup> "The Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley," edited by Mrs. Shelley. London, 1839, four vols. Vol. ii. p. 275.

of Leghorn that he heard the skylark which he has immortalised.

When the English visitor has lingered long enough in the cemetery among the memories of departed British greatness and prosperity, he should go down to the port and gaze upon the one work of surpassing art which Leghorn possesses. Here is a thing to detain the traveller a good ten minutes. It is a statue of Ferdinand I., the father of the city, with four huge Moors chained at his feet. The graceful white marble figure of the Duke, rising serenely against the blue sky, and gazing proudly over the sea whence he had so often swept the fierce Barbary pirates, is the work of Giovanni dell' Opera. But the undoubted artistic beauty of the statue itself is eclipsed by the superb green bronze "quattro mori," writhing at each corner of its pedestal. These figures, instinct with life, and yet full of the artistic spirit which idealises life, are the work of Pier Jacopo Tacca, and they are surely his masterpiece, though I do not forget his equestrian statue of Philip IV. at Madrid. His models he first formed in wax from the originals among the Moorish galley-slaves at Leghorn; indeed a reasonably well-authenticated tradition states that they were taken from a father and three sons. The figures were cast from cannon taken from the infidel. The statue was erected in 1617; two of the Moors in 1623; the other two in

1625. "One of the best pieces of modern work," says John Evelyn, who saw them in 1644.

General Miollis, commander of the French Republican troops which occupied Leghorn, was gravely shocked at this statue. Four sea-robbers chained at the feet of a "tyrant" outraged his sense of fraternity and equality, and he commanded the Municipality to replace the statue of "that monster" with a statue of Liberty. The tyrant who had fought for the freedom of the seas, and his slaves who had sought to destroy it, were removed; but fortunately the French left Leghorn before the Idol of Liberty could be set up, and the statue of Ferdinand with the four Moors was restored to its place with much pomp and circumstance on the 23rd July 1799.

Being now so near the port, the traveller should take a boat and be paddled about the still waters of the harbour. There is business doing of course, but there is no hurry or scurry. The steamers seem to need an eternity to moor or to get fairly under weigh, and the lazy gulls, flapping overhead, cry out in vain speculation at their leisurely and seemingly unmeaning evolutions. The traveller will notice the spick-and-span red-brick Port-Office, with its green Venetian shutters—the prettiest building in Leghorn—the trim white steam-launch moored at its landing stage, and the white gigs slung on its davits. And he will go out to the splendid New

Mole that protects the entrance to the old port, and forms of itself a vast new harbour. It is curvilinear, and nearly three-quarters of a mile in length. The breezy walk along the top of it is like a walk in mid-ocean, invigorating, bracing, life-giving. And what a view! To the south, in the near distance, the villa-studded Montenero and the range of the Colli Livornesi, to the east the Pisan Hills, to the north and north-east the marble mountains of Massa-Carrara and the snow-capped peaks of the Apuan Range, while out in the west the islands of the Tuscan Archipelago, Gorgona, Capraia, Elba, and even Corsica; can be seen slumbering in the sea like huge unpolished amethysts.

But it is as a sea-bathing place that Leghorn chiefly attracts the world. It is unquestionably the principal, as it is unquestionably the most charming of Italian watering-places. The season nominally lasts from the 24th June to the 31st August, and during that time members of all the great Roman and Florentine families are there to enjoy the bracing tonic of the Tyrrhenian waters and the cool *maestrale*, which is denied to Florence and Rome in the summer. Then the place is a brilliant picture of animated gaiety. The delightful sea-front, laid out with tamarisks, stone-pines, oleanders, aloes, and countless ever-green shrubs and luxuriant flower-beds, is alive in the evenings with human life as variegated as





*Photograph by*

THE SEA-FRONT AT LEGHORN

MARZOCCHINI, Leghorn

*To face p. 132*



itself. The beautiful drive by the sea to the neighbouring suburb of Ardenza swarms with the carriages of aristocratic visitors and rich residents, and the old-fashioned landau of a Roman matron of the blackest of "black" families may be seen blocked in the press by the victoria of a lady who, though dressed in the latest fashion, might have stepped from the canvases of Edwin Long, and is the wife of a Tunisian or Israelitish merchant.

The bathing at Leghorn is a veritable luxury. There are a number of bathing establishments built out into the sea, each forming a species of many-armed pier. The establishments are covered with spreading canvas, affording cool shelter from the fiercest sun, while the flapping of the canvas in the breeze acts as an unobtrusive punkah. The brightly-dressed crowd begins to troop on to the Baths at nine o'clock in the morning. There is no twopenny fee as on an English pier; admission is free on all the Baths along the sea-front; but it is wonderful to note with what good sense and good taste the different classes of society confine themselves each to its own particular establishment. The bathing is done out of *barracche*: each *barracca* is a square-shaped canvas tent of goodly dimensions, built out into the sea on a wooden frame-work. Inside the *barracca* is a stone platform with chairs, a fixed dressing-table, and looking-glasses. From

the platform, wooden stairs descend to the green, pellucid sea. A considerable space of water is enclosed in the *barracca*, so that the old, the timid, and the made-up need never go outside their tent; but if you lift the canvas curtains you will find yourself in a pleasant, roomy enclosure, where the water is never more than five feet deep, and thence you can strike out into the sea, the sea, the open sea. Ah! and what a blessed thing it is that the Tyrrhenian has no tides, and that bathing is thus possible at any and whatsoever time of the day you list.

The gaiety of the Leghorn season is full of a happy, easy charm and freshness quite its own. The rendezvous is thoroughly national. Foreigners (unreasonably, I think,) fear the heat and do not come, and it is rarely that you hear any language on the Baths that is not Tuscan or some Italian dialect. Life at this Tuscan watering-place is devoid of the more formal etiquette of the Riviera proper, and, while animated and happy, it is wholly free from the rowdiness of certain Kentish sea-bathing places. Indeed, the Tuscan 'Arry, when you come across him, is a very pleasant and well-mannered fellow, while the Tuscan 'Arriet is distractingly refined and charming.

The Naval Academy of Italy, where all the future officers of her navy are trained, is one of the features of Leghorn, and attracts many



families to the town in the winter months. The cadets are very smart and picturesque little fellows. Three months of every year they, by a very wise provision, go into training on warships in the open seas; they are kept hard at study in the Academy for eight months, and get but one month's holiday in the year. The young Duke of the Abruzzi, a son of the late Duke of Aosta and a nephew of King Humbert, was a cadet here, and the roll-call of the Academy at all times contains historic names that recall the chief glories of Italian history.

In the midst of summer holiday and sea-bathing delights one is apt to forget that Leghorn is a commercial town, a "place of great receipt," as Evelyn calls it. But I suppose that in any account of the place, a word must be spared for its trade and commerce. There is really a great deal of business done in Leghorn, but happily without bustle or greedy eagerness. And there are plenty of industries, but with the exception of the siren at the shipbuilding yard, they make no noise and do not objectionably announce their existence. There is something about Tuscany which softens the asperities of modern factories. Seen from a distance, a few columns of black smoke float up from Leghorn, but they show picturesquely against the blue Tuscan sky, and take new enchanting shapes in the clear Tuscan empyrean.

Orlando's shipbuilding yard is an important place, and comes most under the notice of the public eye. It employs two thousand men and more; it turns out line-of-battle ships (the *Lepanto*) and first-class cruisers (the *Varese*); it has built for foreign Governments, for the Argentine Republic, for Portugal, for the Sultan of Morocco himself (a gun-vessel that is called the "*Beschir-es-Salameh*," which being interpreted means "the bearer of good tidings from Islam to the Four Quarters of the Globe"). There are rolling-mills, there are glassworks, there are soapworks, and flour and maize mills. Twenty-six thousand hundredweight of candied citron are turned out every year, and a vast quantity of the various shapes of Maccheroni, or I should say "*paste*," for Maccheroni is but one of the many different kinds of Italian pastes. An immense amount of Coral is worked in Leghorn. It comes hither from Sicily, Sardinia, Barbary, the Azores, and Japan. The principal coral works, the property of the Brothers Chayes, are situated on the third floor of one of the finest villas, in the midst of one of the most smiling gardens, of the town. Patrician ease, not thriving trade, is suggested by the look of the place: this is a typical instance of the buried nature of the industries of Leghorn. The workers are all girls, and (by the way) Leghorn is famous for the beauty of its girls. Rag-pickers are a large



THE DUKE OF ABRUZZI, AS A BOY

*To face p. 136*





class: Signor Enrico Grandi's warehouse is a busy place between the picking and the storing, and it is certainly an odd sensation to stroll through narrow ravines with, on either hand, from floor to ceiling, great perpendicular piles of hempen cordage, old and new Mungo, and white and coloured vegetable rags. Here, too, nearly all the workers are girls.

What a heap of things come into Leghorn in the course of a year: Coal from Scotland, Wales, and the Tyne, for use chiefly by the railways and the gas companies. There are but six cities in all Tuscany that have gas—Florence, Leghorn, Pisa, Lucca, Siena, and Prato. Artistic Pistoia, lordly Volterra, and ancient Arezzo are content with oil lamps, but some tiny towns and big villages are far ahead of them all and have electric light. Then there is Sulphate of Copper for the sickly vines; dried cod from Newfoundland for the observant of Lent; Tobacco from Kentucky for manufacture into cigars by a paternal Government; Whisky for the travelling Scot and Saxon; Carbonate of Soda; Coffee; Cotton; Hides; Scrap Iron; Jute; Petroleum; Wheat; Wool—and all in great quantities.

And what a heap of things leave Leghorn: Boracic Acid for Lord Lister's antiseptic treatment; Briar-root for conversion into G.B.D.'s; Candied Citron for the Dutch and Scandinavians

who know not how to candy; Coral to adorn the ladies of Nepaul and savage Africa; Hemp from Ferrara for twisting in Chatham and Portsmouth Dockyards; Hides from the great white oxen of the Val d'Arno for London harness; Marble from Carrara for the English dead; the Mercury of Monte Amiata for the gold mines of the Transvaal; Olive Oil for Crosse and Blackwell and the Widow Lazenby; Orris Root from Florence and Verona, without which Rim-mel, and Atkinson, and all the perfume-makers of Grasse would be helpless; Pumice-stone for the Monkey Brand Soap; Rags for the manufacture of newspapers; Straw hats and Tuscan bonnets called of "Leghorn," but which are made fifty miles up the Arno at Signa; Soap compounded of the refuse of pressed olives, which is eagerly sought for on the Spanish main; Siena earths and Ochres which come—things go by contraries in Tuscany—not from Siena but from the Province of Grosseto,<sup>1</sup> and go home to make beautiful the walls of the Academy and the New Gallery. And all these things, too, in great quantities. An entertaining book might be written about the trade of this bright, smiling, happy-go-lucky centre of industry.

The workers of Leghorn, in spite of long

<sup>1</sup> But, of course, the modern Province of Grosseto used to be in the ancient Republic of Siena, and hence the name applied to these pigments.

hours and a low wage, always seem content and happy, and they are great songsters as they stroll homewards after the day's work is done. Their songs, if one does but pay heed to the words, are a sure index to the dominant feelings and hopes of the moment. Twenty years ago some of them used to sing :

“O when I die  
I want the band  
With four *Republicans* at the pall.”

About ten years ago, to the same tune, but with an important change in a word, they commenced to sing like this :

“O when I die  
I want the band  
With four true *Socialists* at the pall.”

I wait in daily expectation of the next change ; the reaction is already setting in :

“O when I die  
I want the band  
With four good *Clericals* at the pall.”

. . . . .

There is a great place of pilgrimage on a hill three miles from Leghorn, Montenero, where, since 1345 (without question, the date), there has existed a remarkable and wonder-working picture of the Madonna. The traveller should choose the 8th September for his visit if he desires to see the place at a characteristic moment, when the Confraternities and Sodalities of the

city go up in their picturesque dresses, and the whole of the steep ascent is lined with a long line of beggars in every stage of squalor and decrepitude. This may be the place to say that if the foreign observer desires to learn the history of a Tuscan town or to understand its people, let him immediately find out the miracle picture of the place and commence to study and acquire its legend: the rest follows of itself by some mysterious means. It is useless to seek to know the Livornesi without learning something about Montenero, to which the least principled of them have some attachment. These miracle pictures have, all the world over, a character which is quite their own. It is not merely that they are, like the pictures of Giotto or Fra Angelico, instinct with a spiritual idea that defies while it ennobles the canons of art, but they have a quality which eludes all analysis, and impresses the instructed even more than the ignorant. On quite natural grounds it seems no wonder that they have come to be called "miraculous," for it would certainly be against all known laws to call them "creations" of art.

The Madonna of Montenero, according to the legend, is said to have come miraculously from Negroponte (where the picture was held in high honour) to Ardenza, near Leghorn, but there is reason to believe that it was removed on natural grounds through fear of a Mahometan rising. A





OUR LADY OF MONTENERO, LEGHORN

*Photographed from the Original by UGO BETTINI, Leghorn*

*To face p. 140*



shepherd is supposed to have found it at Ardenza (a chapel marks the spot), and to have carried it on his back up the hill until, suddenly becoming of unbearable weight, he had to set it down, and that was taken as a sign that a shrine should be built on the spot. From 1455 to 1668 the Sanctuary was in charge of the Jesuats;<sup>1</sup> from 1669 to 1783 it was intrusted to the Clerks Regular of St. Cajetan or Theatines; and they were succeeded in 1793 by monks of the Vallombrosan Congregation of Benedictines, with an Abbot at their head. This Order is still in charge of Montenero. The present Abbot is Dom Arsenio Viscardi; he has the proud attribute of Mitred Abbot, but also the lowly style and calling of parish priest of the village. The church is handsome, and rich in marbles. It is also rich in a remarkable collection of votive pictures depicting, often with harrowing details, and always without regard for perspective or the laws of gravitation, the accident from which the donor had escaped with his life. The wonderful picture of the Madonna, covered by a veil, is enshrined over the High Altar, and may be seen for the asking.

<sup>1</sup> How, the instructed will at once ask, could an order of laymen like the Jesuats be able to serve a church and shrine? The answer is simple: they employed a few secular priests. Further, in 1605 Pope Paul V. allowed them to enter holy orders. The Order was suppressed by Clement IX. in 1668 as being in a declining condition. The Jesuits, who seem destined to receive a large share of both welcome and unwelcome attention, have even been confounded with the Jesuats.

It would be impossible to enumerate the number of times that the city has been preserved from the plague, and the lives of its citizens saved during the perils of an earthquake through the intercession of Our Lady of Montenero. In 1720, and on the 20th May, the sanitary authorities of Leghorn, after anxious deliberation, refused *pratique* to a French vessel from the East as being suspected of having the plague on board. The ship proceeded to Marseilles, and there succeeded in obtaining *pratique*: a great epidemic of the plague was the result. In commemoration of this deliverance all the Leghorn Bills of Health down to the year 1859 bore the image of the Madonna of Montenero.

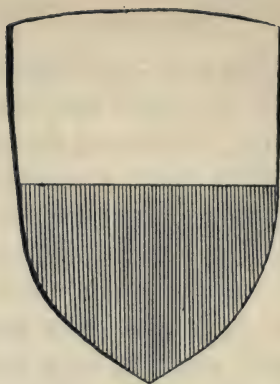
I have no space in these brief paragraphs to indicate any other instances of the tender love and gratitude to the Unseen Good that are generated at such a place as Montenero. The sensible picture is but a symbol of the Unseen—an Unseen Mother, careful and anxious about her children, herself dependent upon an Unseen Father with whom she has much influence, and who is the Lord of All Things. This is how the fisherman, the rag-picker, the coral girl, and the *contadino* look at it, and who is there that would not fain believe that they may have right on their side?

. . . . .

Leghorn, the city that does not “detain the



traveller," that has in it "nothing worth seeing," is far too full of memories and beauties for one brief chapter, and cries aloud for a whole book. Many Italian cities have a qualifying adjective dear to their citizens, that at the first blush seems to be a complete misnomer, but that time and study show to be pre-eminently apt and true. Florence is "la bella," but this you never comprehend until you come to look down upon the city from the heights of San Miniato or Fiesole. Lucca is "l'industriosa," but even after a week's sojourn you rub your eyes and ask if this is not Sleepy Hollow. Genoa is "la superba," but her glory is at first sight dimmed by the obtrusiveness and omnipresence of the commercial element. And Leghorn is "la cara." Surely no attribute could be more glaringly incorrect. And yet let the traveller cease awhile from travelling and take his rest by the Liburnian shore, let him dip in the tonic waters of the Tyrrhenian Sea, and walk by its shores in the cool spring days and warm winter afternoons, drinking in the health-giving breezes and feasting on the glories of the Gorgonian Archipelago, let him mingle freely with the cheery, courteous, contented Livornesi, who dearly love to bid a stranger welcome, and he will see that Time has well named Leghorn "la cara," and that she is dear indeed.



LUCCA

## II

### LUCCA

A CITY in Italy is a very different thing from a city in England. The history of England is great and glorious, but scarce one of her cities has any story that could properly be called history. It is very different with the cities of Italy, which have each, of themselves, the separate histories of great and independent nations: Venice, Genoa, Florence, Milan, Rome, Naples, for example;—or take smaller towns, Bologna, Parma, Modena; Siena, Pisa, Volterra; Pistoia, even, or Padua:—to know the chronicles of such cities is a lesson in universal history and no mere study of everyday municipal life. Think only for a moment of Dewsbury or Hartlepool; of Manchester, Liverpool, or Leeds; of Glasgow,

Middlesborough, Birmingham, or Cardiff:—here we have fruitful industry, busy stirring events, individual heroism and enterprise, but not history on the universal scale. The mere mention of such cities by name serves of itself to bring out the contrast with the dominant note of an Italian city.

In the rich galaxy of the histories of Italian cities I doubt if there is a story more striking, more enchanting, than the story of the Magnificent People and Commune of Lucca. I cannot write the history of Lucca in a brief chapter, but I must spare a paragraph or two to the changes of dominion she has undergone, without which it would be impossible to understand many commonplace allusions and everyday events in the old town. Lucca maintained her existence as an independent State down to the year 1847, and she is still the capital of the modern Italian province bearing her name. I should be afraid to say when her separate existence began, but the year 1160 saw her a Sovereign Republic with great power and many privileges. The first two centuries of the Republic's freedom were broken by the domination of an occasional tyrant—Uguccione della Faggiola, Lord of Pisa, for example, who made himself Lord also of Lucca, until expelled by the famous Castruccio Castracane ("then the greatest war-captain in Europe," says Mr. Ruskin), who in turn became Duke of

Lucca, and proved a kindly and beneficent despot. Lucca fell under Pisan domination from 1342 to 1369, but from that year onwards down to the year 1799, coveted by all, subdued by none, she enjoyed an uninterrupted, contented, proud, and extremely prosperous existence as a free and independent Republic. Unlike the Republics of Genoa and Venice, she even escaped annexation by France. True the French in that year insisted upon her Republican constitution being brought up to date, but the Lucchesi survived the ordeal, and the Fathers of the city seem to have behaved with great courage and patriotism under circumstances very distasteful to the majority of the people.

Napoleon made a definitive end of the Republic in 1805, and erected Lucca, along with Piombino, into a Principality for his sister Elisa and her husband Count Felice Baciocchi. The good Count was little more than a figurehead, but Elisa succumbed to the fascinating influences of the Lucchese character, and ruled in an enlightened and exemplary fashion. She was forced to leave Lucca in 1814 when the change in her brother's fortunes at length came about. Lucca was made a Duchy at the mischief-making Congress of Vienna, and given temporarily to Maria Louisa of Bourbon, Duchess of Parma (who had been Queen also of the short-lived Kingdom of Etruria), in compensation for Parma, which was



given to Napoleon's Empress for life. Maria Louisa died in 1824, and was succeeded by her son Charles Louis, Duke of Lucca, who in 1847 ceded Lucca to the Grand Duke of Tuscany,<sup>1</sup> and two months later, on the death of Napoleon's widow, became Charles II., Duke of Parma. Mother and son were greatly beloved for their justice, generosity, and the lavish benefits they conferred upon a people to whom they were only temporarily tied. They have left a grateful memory behind them in the old Republic, and Maria Louisa's statue by Lorenzo Bartolini is still allowed to adorn the Piazza Napoleone in Lucca. I have been as brief as possible with these dry details, but I can assure the intelligent reader that he would not long be comfortable in Lucca without a familiar knowledge of them.

One word more on the history of Lucca. There is perhaps no State of which the history might be written so fully and so vividly, thanks to the careful custody at all times of the State's Archives. All the material is there ready to hand, and it has already been digested in the

<sup>1</sup> The Grand Duke made a very bad bargain in taking over Lucca from Charles Louis. He was in any case entitled to it on the death of Napoleon's widow. But the Archduchess Maria Louisa, who was only fifty-six at the time of her death, was expected to live much longer, and the Grand Duke Leopold was in such a hurry to come into so fine a heritage that he paid the Duke of Lucca a handsome pension for the cession of his territory which he would have got for nothing had he but waited two months more.

splendid "Inventario"<sup>1</sup> of the late Salvatore Bongi, who, during his long term of keepership, reduced the *Archivio* to its present most perfect methodical order. The *Archivio di Stato* of Lucca, with its wealth of parchments (the earliest bears date the 2nd April 790), with its immense collection of charters, statutes, edicts, treaties, letters-patent, bulls and briefs, and imperial privileges, is one of the most interesting places of the kind in Italy. I recommend even a cursory visit to the speeding traveller, and his lot will be enviable if he have the good fortune to find in his guide Baron Francesco Acton, one of the assistant keepers, and, in a sense, an Englishman.

In approaching Lucca you will come either from Pisa or Pistoia, and either way your eyes will be made glad by the rich and beautiful country through which you have to pass. It is the country of the husbandman, the country of the vine, the olive, the mulberry, of tall maize and waving corn, of the scarlet trefoil and the purple vetch. On either hand you behold one vast fruitful stretch of fertile land all assiduously cultivated by the hand of man; it is hard to understand in such a place why Italy is the poorest and not the richest country in the world. And as you approach Lucca, you will see that it is a city entirely girded by a stout brick wall of closely wrought and very perfect masonry, and that this

<sup>1</sup> "Inventario del R. Archivio di Stato," 4 vols., 1872, &c.

wall and its rounded bastions are planted with avenues of shady trees,—maples, acacias, limes, and elms. From the station you will enter the city by the Porta San Pietro, where over the ancient gateway there once stood the arms of the old Republic: azure, on a bend or, the glorious word LIBERTAS. It is laughable to record that during the new-fangled Republic inspired by French models the extreme party took offence at a motto written in a dead language, and suggested that the Italian word “libertà” should be substituted for the Latin



REPUBLIC OF LUCCA

“libertas.”<sup>1</sup> As if “libertas” were not perfectly intelligible to every Italian peasant, and as if liberty were not all the more glorious for being as old as the Latin language.

Having passed through the gate and satisfied the courteous *octroi* (*dazio consumo*) officials that you have nothing to declare, you will, if you take Mr. Hare’s advice, drive straight to the Albergo dell’ Universo, and take your ease in that inn. It is good, sound, and serviceable advice. The hotel occupies the first floor of the old Palazzo

<sup>1</sup> Mazzarosa, “Storia di Lucca,” vol. ii. p. 78.

Arnolfini (sixteenth century) and fronts the Teatro del Giglio, where in September there is excellent opera. Mr. Hare, who is usually reticent in such matters, launches into quite unwonted praise of the old inn. "It is," he says, "most excellent and reasonable. It has a small garden, and its large lofty rooms are cool and airy in summer. This inn deserves special notice, because, without losing its character as an Italian albergo, it has all the comfort and cleanliness which English travellers require."<sup>1</sup> In turning over the leaves of the visitors' book at the inn, I discovered unexpected and exalted testimony to its worth. Here is what I found:—

"Mr. Ruskin and Mr. Collingwood stayed here three weeks in the October of 1882; and have been entirely comfortable in the care of M. Nieri and his servants."

The Lucchesi remember Mr. Ruskin's several visits very well, and with much pride and pleasure. They tell many an anecdote about the "gran scrittore inglese," who used to go about with a man bearing a ladder, and scale the façades and interiors of their churches, peering into all manner of nooks and crannies with strange persistency and devotion. And the landlady of the Universo will tell you, not without a touch of compassion in her voice, how the "povero Signor Collingwood" was made to lie on his back, and

<sup>1</sup> Augustus J. C. Hare, "Cities of Central Italy," vol. i. p. 54.



copy the design on the ceiling of the master's bedroom. Small wonder when one has seen the design, which is delicate and extremely beautiful.

The first glimpse of the city from outside is so entrancing, that leaving for a moment churches, palaces, monuments, and picture galleries, our natural instinct leads us straight back to the walls. The walk round these walls still remains one of the most beautiful in Italy. It is not what it was (alas!), for the moderns cut down many portions of the splendid avenues which sweep right round the ramparts. Still on the bastions many old trees have been left standing, and the young avenues on the curtains are growing apace and thriving. No one who did not know the splendour of the old order would dream of quarrelling with the new. On some of the bastions there are statues. Mazzini and Benedetto Cairoli are here, far from home, and seemingly out of their element: King Charles III. of Spain seems more in place, for he was at least grandfather to Maria Louisa, first Duchess of Lucca. The city is entirely surrounded by hills and mountains, with the exception of a gap to the east, but the hills are at a respectful distance, so that the city is not uncomfortably inclosed. The prospect is gentle and most alluring. From the walls, due south, one gets a good view of the handsome aqueduct that brings cool sweet drinking-water from the

hills to the town. It is composed of 459 arches, and is a good three miles in length. This is one of the many benefits for which the Lucchesi bless the memory of Maria Louisa of Bourbon, their Duchess.

Lucca has ever been, and still is, a very religious city. To satisfy the spiritual wants of a population of some 22,000 souls there are about seventy churches and chapels, many of them still in use. Here and there the powers that be have seized upon a church or a monastery—often with too little regard for Lucchese tradition and sentiment—and turned it to secular uses. San Francesco, the fine church of the Conventual Franciscans, which contains the tomb of Castuccio Castracane, the “war-captain,” is now a busy military store; and in order to gaze upon the modest resting-place of the great warrior, one has to obtain a permit from the Colonel in command. Here too is the mausoleum of Monsignor Giovanni Guidiccioni, the elegant poet and polished *littérateur*, whose letters are an Italian classic. It is boarded up, and may no longer be seen, though I have read somewhere that it is of great beauty.

The three most interesting of the seventy churches are the Duomo (San Martino), the Lombard church of San Frediano, and the church of San Michele (“a noble piece,” says John Evelyn). Both San Frediano and San Michele

date in great part from the eighth century, but you learn in Lucca to take dates of three figures without drawing breath, and soon come to regard the eventful century of St. Francis and St. Dominic as matter of very recent history. On the topmost point of the façade of San Michele is a huge sculptured figure of the Archangel, which dominates the whole city. In San Frediano there is a majolica Annunciation of the Della Robbia school, literally a dream of beauty, and one of Francesco Francia's best pictures, a Coronation of the Virgin. Here likewise is the tomb and incorrupt body of Santa Zita, model and patroness of waiting-women, who is honoured even in far-away London by the English branch of the servant-maids' Guild of St. Zita. Of the rich treasures of the Duomo it is impossible to speak in a brief chapter. Professor Ridolfi has devoted a stout volume to the subject, in which the curious may revel and riot.<sup>1</sup> But the Duomo contains the greatest of all Lucca's treasures, that which throughout the ages of faith caused the eyes of all Christendom to be turned upon her, in comparison of which her exploits in war, her flourishing commerce, her triumphs in art, were as nothing in the estimation of the nations—this is the VOLTO SANTO—and of this singular treasure, too easily dismissed by the en-

<sup>1</sup> Enrico Ridolfi, "L'Arte in Lucca studiata nella sua Cattedrale." Lucca, 1882.

lightened traveller, I crave leave to say a word or two.

The Volto Santo is a cedar-wood crucifix about thirteen feet in length, the figure of it clad in the seamless coat reaching to the feet. It was carved at Ramah, a city of the tribe of Benjamin, by that master of Israel whose name was Nicodemus, and while he slept an angel finished the face which he had feared to begin. Then it passed to the custody of holy men, who jealously shielded it from the fury of the Iconoclasts, until 782, when it was discovered to a pilgrim bishop from Piedmont, Gualfredo by name, by an angel of the Lord, who appeared to him in a vision. Gualfredo, always instructed by the angel, put it on board of an empty bark in the neighbouring port of Joppa, and committed it to the mercy of the waves. The bark was miraculously guided to the old city of Luni, near the modern Spezia, and here sojourning at the time of its arrival was Giovanni, Bishop of Lucca. Giovanni, admonished he too by an angel of the Lord, was commanded to bear the holy image to Lucca. But the people of Luni not unnaturally objected to thus losing this miraculous treasure. Finally, it was agreed that the Volto Santo should be placed on a cart drawn by two white oxen, and that wherever these oxen went, there the Volto Santo should remain. The oxen went straight to the city of Lucca, and there the Volto Santo





THE VOLTO SANTO, LUCCA

*To face p. 154*



has ever since remained, working great wonders, and drawing to this day vast crowds of pilgrims from all corners of the Catholic world.

The wonders and marvels of this old legend are not so wonderful nor so marvellous as the Volto Santo itself, which you may see with your own eyes at Lucca on any of the four or five days of the year on which it is exposed to the veneration of the faithful. Look at the representation of it here reproduced ; look at this face so full of pathos, of infinite love, and pity, and sorrow, so *Divine* in fact, and you feel quite naturally that you are on the borderland of miracle, and insensibly nearer to understanding what manner of man was He who was despised and rejected of men. It is easy to prove that the Volto Santo has been in Lucca over a thousand years ; it is easy to prove that it came from the East. Whether Nicodemus carved it, or whether it came to Luni in an open boat, does not seem to matter much. All our interest in scientific methods of criticism fades in the presence of a face that is so little terrestrial that it is difficult to understand how the mind of man can have imagined, or the hand of man have fashioned it. The piety of ages has added to the simulacrum a rich bejewelled robe of velvet covering the old cedar-wood robe, and a massive golden crown studded with diamonds, emeralds, rubies, and sapphires, a marvel of the goldsmith's most elabo-

rate art. The feast of *Santa Croce* on the 14th September of each year, when the *Volto Santo* is exposed, is still the greatest day in the Lucchese calendar.<sup>1</sup>

Lucca can boast of one supreme artist, the sculptor Matteo Civitali, who was born in 1436 and died in 1501. There is an old tablet in existence which says he was a barber until he was forty, when suddenly seized with a love of sculpture, he as suddenly developed into a sculptor. Certainly no record tells who his master was, and the learned Marchese Mazzarosa thinks that he had no master. It is likely enough, for spontaneity is one of the distinguishing characteristics of his work. It is pretty certain that Matteo took to sculpture quite late in life, for there is no known work of his before the year 1472, when he was thirty-six years of age. He was a Lucchese to the finger-tips, and, with the exception of six statues for the Chapel of San Giovanni in the Duomo of Genoa, he did no work that was not destined for his native city and her territory. To this day, outside Lucca,

<sup>1</sup> The *Volto Santo* has never been photographed. My reproduction, showing only half the figure, is taken from a drawing by Nicolao Landucci, and is a very faithful likeness. Mediæval Englishmen had a great devotion to the *Volto Santo*. William of Malmesbury records that the Red King habitually swore "*per sanctum vultum de Luca*," and in the old London church of St. Thomas there was an effigy of the *Volto Santo*, the cult of which was cared for by the Lucchese colony. See Canon Almerico Guerra's "*Storia del Volto Santo*." Lucca, 1881.





*Photograph by*

*ALINARI, Florence*

THE TOMB OF SAN ROMANO, BY MATTEO CIVITALI

*To face p. 156.*



you cannot well study Civitali. There is his statue of Faith in the Bargello at Florence; a frieze, two tabernacles, and statuettes of the Virgin and St. John Baptist at South Kensington; the head of a woman at Berlin—these, and the statues at Genoa, are (I believe) the only works of Civitali that have found their way beyond the borders of the old Republic. The Duomo of Lucca is full of his masterpieces. There is the tomb of Pietro da Noceta (1472), the secretary of Pope Nicholas V., whose recumbent figure, with its startlingly sweet and peaceful face, makes you more than half in love with death; there are the two adorable Angels (1477) in adoration, one on either side of the Tabernacle, in the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament; there is the modest tomb and beautiful bust of Domenico Bertini (1479), the pulpit (1494–1498), the altar and tomb of St. Regulus (1484), the figure of St. Sebastian (1484), the first genuine instance perhaps of mediæval sculpture in the nude, and amongst other works, two exquisite holy-water stoups. Outside San Michele there is a Virgin and Child, inside San Romano the tomb of the saint. But the crowning glory of Matteo Civitali (to my mind) is the *Madonna delle Tosse*, the sweet figure of the Blessed Virgin with her Infant at the breast, which is hidden away—and almost forgotten—in the Church of the SS. Trinità. Santa Trinità is an obscure and barn-

like church of the cinquecento, out-of-the-way and most uninviting in its exterior. Civitali's priceless work is covered by a curtain (for it is an object of devotion), so that unless you know of it and ask to see it, you will miss one of the greatest sights of Lucca. Some of the subtlest qualities of the work—a certain fresh youthfulness that in the original tempers the idea of the mother and the matron—seem to have evaporated in the photograph from which this engraving is reproduced, but happily the sweet expressive mouth and loving eyes have been to the full preserved. The statue could only have been designed by a man of the softest heart, and indeed it is precisely in the expression of love and tenderness that Matteo excels all his fellows. Civitali was, moreover, a fine and practical architect. He is thought to have built the Palazzo Pretorio, and to him belongs the honour of having built the dome-like chapel (*Tempietto*) in which is preserved the sacrosanct and venerable Volto Santo. In 1893 the Lucchesi, with much ceremony, placed a very creditable statue of him in the Loggia of the Palazzo Pretorio.<sup>1</sup>

Lucca is a curiously recondite city. It abounds in treasures and surprises, but few of them are patent. You must live there a long time, and

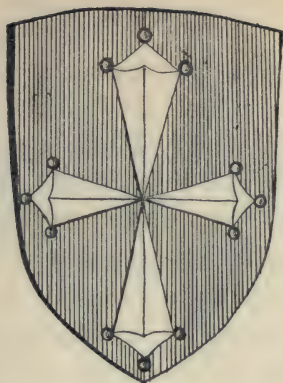
<sup>1</sup> The reader desirous of further information about Matteo is referred to the beautifully illustrated work of M. Charles Yriarte : "Matteo Civitali ; sa Vie et son Œuvre." Paris, 1886.



be patient and very courteous, if you would fathom its secrets. Gradually you will become aware that there is matter of interest hidden away in the old town abundant enough to last a lifetime; gradually the full fascination of this unique place grows upon you; with difficulty you tear yourself away from it and go back to the rough, jostling, immoderate and unmeasured life of the world outside, but never do you succeed in rooting out of your heart the sweet ennobling memories of this most favoured spot of God's earth. And perhaps the warmest corner of all in your heart will be reserved for the Lucchesi themselves. What a people! What a nation! Piety, probity, frugality, the quality of honest pride born of long independence under wise, just, and free government—perfect skill in manufactures and agriculture, idiosyncratic, unparagoned, the growth of illustrious and sane traditions—all these characteristics of their national individuality still survive in the Lucchesi, and have not yet given way before the automatic uniformity that has too mercilessly been adopted by the modern unity. Heine—the semi-pagan Heinrich Heine—has luminously described the Lucchese territory in a single sentence of two solitary words.<sup>1</sup> *Nirgends Philistergesichter*, he says: nowhere may you see the face of a Philistine. This high eulogium of

<sup>1</sup> "Sämmtliche Werke," vol. vi. "Reisebilder: die Stadt Lucca," p. 126. Hamburg, 1884.

Lucca by one of the dearest favourites of the modern world should surely cause the busy sightseer to turn aside for a moment from the beaten track of travellers, and behold with his own eyes a city that is free of Philistines and a country that recalls all the glories of the Promised Land.



PISA

### III

#### PISA

PISA to the general imagination is nothing more than a city of a few superb sights. Men drive from the station with closed eyes to that remote corner of the town where stands one of the seven wonders of the world, and three of its greatest marvels. Few are the travellers that stay more than one night in Pisa, and very many are they who find a break of a few hours sufficient to "do" its "sights." Nor does Pisa any longer attract or bewitch the foreign resident; I scarce can tell why, though there certainly does seem to be an indefinable something the matter with the place. It is dull, but so is charming Lucca; it is not comforting, but neither is Arezzo the alluring; its people are less lovable than many

Tuscans, yet they are immeasurably to be preferred to the showy Ghibellines of Siena the bewitching. Pisa may be suffering from a complication of ills not readily definable, but one of its disorders at least is sufficiently easy of diagnosis. It is suffering from a very virulent access of modernity in its ideas, and these, cast into the majestic mould of its mediæval glories, mix ill and produce a certain uncomfortable sense of the incongruous.

And yet, in spite of all that the anxious but carping well-wisher may say, how charming it is and how beautiful! If the Lung' Arno of Florence is more picturesque, the Lung' Arno of Pisa, curved like a delicate section of Giotto's O, is ten times more stately and more beautiful. Multi-coloured and many-formed palaces, still in all their mediæval pride and splendour, rise up on each side against the blue sky with all the serene assurance of perennial existence and unchangeableness, while on the southern bank, plumb with the wall of the quay, is the choicest of all Gothic gems, the little Church of Santa Maria della Spina, central and chief jewel of this perfect circlet. Attached to this church there exists what the passing traveller wots not of, the foundation for a very ancient Mass, the *Messa dei Cacciatori*, which used to be said as early as two or three in the morning to enable the Pisan huntsmen of mediæval days to be be-





*Photograph by*

*VAN LINT, Pisa*

THE CAMPO SANTO AND THE PISAN PLAINS (FROM THE LEANING TOWER)

*To face p. 162*



times on the road and yet spiritually fortified. The Mass is still in existence, is still called "dei Cacciatori," but is no longer said preternaturally early, and is unattended by any sportsman that ever I saw.

The Cathedral of Pisa is one of the finest in the world; its Baptistry the most gem-like; its Campanile the most remarkable; its Campo Santo quite the most unique and memorable. The reader is rightly already a little wearied of hearing of these marvels: historians and art critics have exhausted the subject, and cheap scribblers have bored us with their irksome iterations. It is a weariness of the flesh to commend the matchless. I leave the intelligent reader to a good catalogue and his own thoughts. Of the Baptistry I would only say: do not omit to hear the famous echo that will strike sweet chords aloft at your bidding. And of the Leaning Tower: go up to the top of it and see what you may see—Livorno and the ships that go down into the sea, the Tuscan Archipelago when the atmosphere is kind, the mountains of the Carrarese and the Garfagnana, the hills that shut out the sight of Lucca, and the great plain of Pisa stretching at your feet all adorned with the work of busy husbandmen. And of the Duomo I would merely say: try and be present when there is a function on, when in the choir there is a full Chapter of the Canons in their red

cassocks, looking like so many stately Princes of the Church, when the Epistle and Gospel are chanted from the lofty pulpits on the right and left hand of the High Altar, when sweet music and fragrant incense rise heavenwards, when the venerable Archbishop, Count Capponi, raises his hand in the final *Benedicat vos*. It is then that you more properly realise that this noble building is no mere mediæval "sight," preserved in perfect order for the instruction of travellers, but that it has its living and very practical uses. Wait, too, a moment at the south transept door, and see the venerable Archbishop depart. Outside there is a heavy, old-fashioned landau and a bag-wigged coachman in sober livery of last century ; inside a crowd of what looks like the scum of Pisa. They are waiting for his Excellency, Monsignor Capponi, and he cannot get through them until he has blessed them all, and taken all their dirty little babies in his arms, and emptied his pockets of the few coppers which his charities have left him. This is indeed one of the "sights" of Pisa, and it is a sight very good for sore eyes.

But I have another motive in speaking thus briefly of the important Duomo : it is, in truth, that I may have space to speak more fully of its central feature, which, being an object of devotion intimately associated with the history and people of Pisa, and not merely an object of art, has been dismissed by some guide-books in two



or three lines. This is *Santa Maria sotto gli Organi*, chief miracle-picture of the Commune and City of Pisa.

The picture is unquestionably Byzantine. Morrona opines that it was the work of one of the colony of Greek artists resident in Pisa, and was painted at the end of the eleventh or beginning of the twelfth century.<sup>1</sup> He is no doubt right as to its great antiquity, but it is more likely to have been brought to Italy, like so many other objects, by some crusading knight returning from the East. There are many stories, vague and unproved all of them, as to how the picture came to Pisa. The favourite tradition is that it came from the Castle of Lombrici in the Lucchese territory. The Count of Lombrici was at war with the Republic of Lucca, and the Pisan Republic lent him 200 fighting men. They were unable to hold the Castle against the Lucchesi, but managed to make good their escape, bringing with them the Madonna, which had been venerated in the Castle Oratory. There is nothing miraculous in the story, but it is not as well authenticated as some miracles.

The *Madonna sotto gli Organi*—so called, by the way, because the picture was once attached to a pillar below the organ—has certainly been in Pisa since the thirteenth century. When Charles VIII.

<sup>1</sup> Alessandro Morrona, "Pisa Illustrata," vol. i. p. 449. Pisa, 1812. A noteworthy book.

of France entered Pisa on the 9th November 1494 in his character of Deliverer, the cult was flourishing, and from that day the records of it are full and unbroken. There is one fact of great interest about the Pisan Madonna: that until the 13th December 1789 there is no record of any mortal eye ever having beheld it after it had once been veiled in the Cathedral. The picture was covered by seven veils: it would be moved to a different position, placed over a special altar, carried about the Church and city in procession, but it was never unveiled. It is quite certain that at least for three centuries after Charles's coming no one ever saw it. In a MS. History of the Churches of Pisa by a certain Canon Ottavio d'Abramo, which is preserved in the Archives of the Chapter, the story is told how the Archbishop of Pisa, del Pozzo, a Piedmontese, so recently as the year 1607, resolved to break with tradition and see the Madonna. He took unto himself two of the Canons, Domenico Sabini and Camillo Ciurini, and a workman, and in their presence began to remove the veils. When he got to the seventh veil he was seized with a shivering fit, and cried out in his dialect (so circumstantial is the narrative): "*Covrila, covrila, peesto!*" He died soon afterwards; Canon Sabini cut his throat with a razor; Canon Ciurini lived but a short while and died in poverty; the workman became blind. So runs the story.



*Immagine della B. Vergine detta di sotto gli Organi  
venerata nella Chiesa Primaziale Pisana.  
scoperta il dì 13 Dicembre 1789.  
ricoperta il dì 11. Giugno 1790*

*Raffaello Tompagni del.*

*Landriani fecit.*

SANTA MARIA SOTTO GLI ORGANI, PISA

To face p. 166





In 1596 occurred the great and disastrous fire in the Duomo. A hero in Pisan annals, Curtius (fit name for the leap he took), the son of Vincent Ferrini, plunged into the Cathedral when it was raining molten lead and saved the picture. Even then no attempt was made to see it. It was placed in the Baptistery and not restored to its altar in the Cathedral until the 16th November 1604. It was "uncovered" and carried in procession only seven times in the seventeenth century, the last occasion on the 7th November 1684, for a great occasion, the delivery of Vienna from the Turk by John Sobieski. But let the reader take careful note that "uncovered" (*scoperta, scoprimento*) did not in those days mean "unveiling." It meant that the picture was taken out of the shrine in which it was locked, but not that the veils were removed from in front of it. At length, on the 13th December 1789, by order of the Grand Duke Peter Leopold—like his brother the Emperor Joseph a bit of a "Sacristan," and, though devout, a bit of a Febronian—the historic *Madonna di sotto gli Organi* was completely unveiled for the first known time in history. It was immediately recognised to be a Byzantine picture of great antiquity. On the book held by the Bambino is written in Greek characters the 12th verse of the eighth chapter of St. John's Gospel: *Ego sum lux mundi. Qui sequitur me non ambulat in tenebris, sed habebit lumen vitæ*; and over the halo

of the Bambino is a monogram signifying *Mater Dei*. Morrona made a careful examination of it, and has minutely described what he saw.<sup>1</sup> The picture was removed from its shrine on the 15th January 1790, and, with due precautions, was entrusted to the Pisan artist Giovanni Tempesti for restoration. Tempesti also made a copy of it from which my reproduction is taken. The picture has been unveiled—of course now literally—eleven times in the present century, the last three occasions being in 1852, 1870, and 1897. In 1846 a terrible earthquake shook Pisa; the Church of St. Michael fell in; there was much damage to property, but no loss of life or injury to limb. In thanksgiving for this deliverance the Madonna was solemnly crowned on the Feast of the Assumption in 1847 in the presence of the Archbishop, the Gonfaloniere, the Knights of St. Stephen in their white Cappæ Magnæ, the Professors of the University, and a host of the regular and secular clergy, and of the civil and military authorities. When the cult is sufficiently ancient a miracle-picture is usually crowned. Will the function seem childish to some readers? 'Tis but a species of symbolical and ceremonial tribute to the Heavenly Powers. Do we not in England crown our pictures and chandeliers with holly and evergreens in honour of Him who made the season joyful for us? The Madonna

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. i. p. 449 *et seq.*

of Montenero was crowned so long ago as 1690; it had been impossible to crown the Madonna of Pisa in the past as she had never been unveiled. The crowning consists in affixing to the picture, on the heads of the Madonna and the Bambino, crowns of gold or silver and precious stones. *Santa Maria sotto gli Organi* was unveiled in 1897 in honour of the Jubilee of the Coronation. A terrible and heartrending disaster occurred. On the 29th May, in the packed Basilica, a cry of "Fire!" a panic-stricken stampede, seven or eight poor wretches trampled to death, and scores of others gravely injured. One poor mother was knocked down, and her little child, not two years old, was whirled away from her among the trampling crowd, she saw not whither. When the ambulance came over from the neighbouring hospital to recover the dead and wounded, the child was found under a bench, smiling and happy, a little dazed, but without so much as a bruise. The grateful mother has put the little pink "festa" frock it wore at the time in a glass case, and had this affixed to the pillar in front of the Altar of the Madonna of Pisa, thereby tendering public thanks to Heaven for so marvellous an escape. The little frock of baby Bertelli is now one of the most conspicuous objects of the shrine, and surely the mother's faith and gratitude must be writ in golden characters in the registers of the Recording Angel. Search out, I once

more say, search out the miracle-picture of a place, if ever you would come to know the intimate pulsations of the Tuscan heart, the finest qualities of the Tuscan soul.

The Altar of the *Madonna sotto gli Organi* is on the Gospel side of the Choir, just by the door of the Canons' Sacristy. Many lamps burn before it. It has a fine silver frontal. Votive offerings hang on all sides, and there are many in the Sacristy behind the Altar, one, an offering from the jockeys of the Italian Newmarket, Barbericina, hard by Pisa, being an effective conjunction of two silver-gilt horses' heads, a saddle, and other insignia of sport. Over the Altar is a silver door blazing with jewels, and behind this door is the venerable image of *Santa Maria sotto gli Organi*. The door is locked by two keys, both necessary for reaching the picture; one is kept by the Archbishop, the other by the Sindaco of Pisa. It therefore needs both ecclesiastical and municipal consent to expose the picture. There are no stated times for unveiling the Madonna. The ceremony would only take place at a time of intercession for the averting of some great calamity, or to render thanks for deliverance from some great evil. If all goes well with the Pisans in these coming years, as I pray God with all my heart it may, Santa Maria sotto gli Organi will not be unveiled until 1947, the first centenary of her glorious coronation.



Among churches next in order of interest to the Duomo comes the Church of the Order of the Knights of Saint Stephen, situated in the Piazza de' Cavalieri, as beautiful if not as imposing a piazza as any in all Italy. The Church is hung with Moorish flags and trophies of war, taken by the Knights from the Barbary pirates and the devastating Turk, and with quaint figure-heads and other portions of Moorish and Turkish galleys that were once towed in captive to the harbour of Leghorn. There is no other sight like it in the world. The Church is the design of Vasari, and was begun in 1565. The richly decorated ceiling is covered with paintings illustrative of the history of the Order by Cigoli, Ligozzi and Allori. And note the splendid rococo High Altar of chocolate-coloured porphyry picked out with gold and surmounted by the white marble figure in glory of Pope St. Stephen, the Patron of the Order. Adjoining the church is the imposing Conventual Palace of the Knights, once a famous school of practical chivalry, now a habitation of certain students of the University.

The Religious and Military Order of St. Stephen was founded by Cosimo, first Grand Duke of Tuscany [whose statue stands before the Palace stairs], so lately as 1561. It was placed under the patronage of St. Stephen, Pope and Martyr, because Duke Cosimo had

already gained a decisive victory on the Saint's feast-day, the 2nd of August, and he took it as of good augury. The Military Knights might marry and hold property ; the Religious Knights took the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. They lived a monastic life under the rule of St. Benedict, and had care of the Church and its fine functions. The objects of the Order were to rid the Mediterranean of pirates, redeem the poor Christian captives, and propagate the Christian religion. They did good service at the battle of Lepanto—a sufficiently critical moment for Christendom. The Cross of the Order is of the same shape as that of the Knights of Malta, but red instead of white. It figures largely in Pisan heraldry, for the knights had the privilege of adding it to their arms on a Chief of Augmentation.

There have been some few Englishmen among the Knights, as is shown by the briefs now preserved in the Pisan Record Office (*Archivio di Stato*). As for instance :—

1. Thomas and Henry Joseph, sons of my Lord Clifford of Chudleigh, vested the former at Florence on the 14th May 1712, and Henry Joseph at Pistoia on the 24th July 1720.

2. Captain Francis Acton, admitted at San Savino, near Pisa, on the 18th December 1768.

3. Robert Nangle, 15th March 1712.

4. Thomas, described as the son of Count

Gherardo Tyrell, invested on the 21st October 1738.

5. Captain Michael Jerome O'Kelly and Canon John Emmanuel O'Kelly, the Captain invested on the 28th April 1742, the Canon on the 27th September 1788.

6. Cæsar Walter Kennedy Laurie, to take a very recent instance, invested on the 14th October 1851.

7. And to take the last instance of a British name, though it belonged to an Austrian subject, Count Maximilian O'Donnel, who was invested on the 27th December 1851.<sup>1</sup>

The Order was swept away by the French Revolution, but was revived again in a modified form in 1817. The Italian Revolution once more swept it away beyond hope of revival in 1859, and its Church and property became the property of the State. Alas! that modern Italy should not be a little more tender of the memories of her past glories.

Delightful are the excursions round about Pisa. There is a steam-tram along the banks of the Arno to the mouth, where, at the conjunction of the river and the sea, stands a trim little watering-place, Bocca d'Arno. It is worth while to de-

<sup>1</sup> Information kindly furnished, at much trouble, by my courteous and learned friend, Professor Clemente Lupi, Archivist of the Pisa Record Office.

scend half way at the tram station of San Pier in Grado, and see the old Basilica of this name. It marks the spot where, says tradition, the Prince of the Apostles, coming from Antioch to make of Rome the Mother and Mistress of Churches, first set foot upon Italian soil, and here he erected his first Altar in the Peninsula. Clement, the fourth Pope in succession to Peter, is said to have built a church here, and the present Basilica is supposed to have been begun at the end of the tenth century. Portraits of the Popes from Peter to John XIV. (obit. 985) run round the walls of the nave above the arches, and below the portraits curious frescoes illustrating the lives of SS. Peter and Paul.

The steam-tram likewise runs in the opposite direction, right into the heart of the smiling Pisan *contrade* to Calci, where there is a much admired Charterhouse. Hence you may go to Nicosia hard by, and see the Convent of the Friars Minor, which shelters in lowly obscurity so famous a man as Fra Agostino da Montefeltro, the modern Chrysostom. And from Calci you may ascend the conical Verruca, on the summit of which are the remains of the most formidable fort of the fighting Republic of Pisa. The fort is well known to students of the Tuscan tongue as having contained what is reputed to be the oldest existing inscription in the vernacular (A.D. 1103). The authenticity of the inscription (which



is brief enough—"A - DI - DODICI - GUGNO - MCIII.") has been disputed by the learned, and is now under consideration of perhaps the most competent authority in all Italy to decide such a subject. He has not yet pronounced judgment.

The handsome Royal Park of San Rossore is but three miles' drive from the centre of Pisa. It is well worth going there if only to see a flourishing herd of camels that have become indigenous to Tuscan soil. The first camels were introduced into Tuscany by the Grand Duke Ferdinand II. in 1622. Others taken by General Arighetti from the Turks in a battle near Vienna were likewise sent home in 1663. Camels were fitfully introduced between 1700 and 1738, but apparently only as curiosities. Francis II. of Lorraine (reigned 1737-1745), the founder of the new dynasty, first took the matter up seriously. He established the camels at San Rossore, and having procured twenty more, thirteen males and seven females, he attempted breeding with complete success. By 1785 the herd numbered one hundred and thirty-four, and had increased in 1789 to one hundred and ninety-six. Other Italian sovereigns, envious of the Grand Duke's success, tried camel-breeding at home, but failure was the result, nor could the camel be acclimatised in any other part of Tuscany except San Rossore. Even here a succession of cold winters affects them unfavourably.

The severe winters of 1811 and 1812 reduced them by one half; in 1814 there were but one hundred and eighteen. In 1878 there were one hundred and twenty, and in 1900 the number is about one hundred and fifty.

The males are used in the carrying of wood which has been hewn upon the estate. Each camel can carry about 1000 lbs. at a time. As a rule, only one male is used each year for breeding purposes. The camels of Pisa breed from the middle of February to the end of April. The young are weak and weedy for the first two days, and have to be held up by the attendants when they want to suck. The late Professor Luigi Lombardini, who had studied their habits closely, considers this may be a sign of degeneration, but the animals that come to maturity are all fine specimens, and can do the work of an African camel. The camels of San Rossore, like all others, strip all the leaves they can off the trees up to a height of eight feet or so. When leaves fail they will eat prickly bushes, but grass only as a last resort. There are two large sheds for the camels, one for the males and one for the females. But the females live in the open, except during the last four months of pregnancy and when suckling. The camel detests rain. If in the open, they will huddle together under the trees; if in their sheds, they will stay within, even if their supply of fodder is exhausted.



*Photograph by*

Mrs. CARMICHAEL

# A PISAN CAMEL



*Photograph by*

Dr. E. BARNES

# PISAN CAMELS, MOTHER AND CHILD





The young are weaned after twelve to fifteen months. If it is required to wean them sooner, the mother is clipped so as to become unrecognisable, and after a futile search and an unpleasant reception from six or seven other mothers, the youngster resigns himself to more solid food. Altogether an interesting study and an interesting sight, these camels, which have been successfully reared so far from home.<sup>1</sup>

It is a far cry from camels to the Porto Pisano, the old port of the Republic, and it is a long way from Pisa to its former port. The fact that Italian towns have given their names to nations and to countries sometimes breeds confusion. The Arno was navigable centuries ago, and Pisa was a port and had an arsenal; but the *Port of Pisa* or *Porto Pisano* formed no part of the city of Pisa, and was itself a flourishing commercial centre and fortified town situated on the sea-coast, just outside and to the north of the modern Leghorn. The Porto Pisano was defended by seven graceful towers, one of which, the white marble Marzocco, built under Florentine dominion so recently as 1423, is still standing in all its glory, and is now used as a coastguard station. There are the remains of two others, much more ancient

<sup>1</sup> Most of these interesting particulars regarding the camels of San Rossore have been taken from the interesting work on the camel in general of the late Professor Luigi Lombardini, "Sui Cammelli." Pisa, 1879.

—the Maltarchiata and the Magnale. The tower called the “Toretta” has given its name to the busy industrial suburb of Leghorn, “La Toretta,” near the railway station, where stand the rolling-mills, the glassworks, the flour and maize mills, the “*paste*” factories, and the dusty coalyards. The Porto Pisano was defended by chains. Every traveller goes to the Campo Santo, and there sees the chains which the Genoese Republic took from the Pisan Republic in 1362, and which the city of Genoa restored to the city of Pisa in 1860 after the accomplishment of unity, as a pledge of the new brotherly love. I have heard more than one traveller say that these chains defended the port of the *city* of Pisa. That is not so: they defended the entrance to the *Porto Pisano*, or port of the Republic of Pisa, situated nine miles to the south of the Arno.

I cannot here write the history of the once busy and important Porto Pisano.<sup>1</sup> Like Leghorn later on, it was a commercial emporium, and seems to have been used not only by the Pisans, but also by the Venetians, the Lucchesi, the Florentines, and the Bolognese. It was almost destroyed by Genoa in 1284, and after the Genoese assault in 1363 it gradually lost all importance and fell into disrepair. When the

<sup>1</sup> But see an interesting work to which I am indebted for some of these particulars, “Il Porto Pisano : la sua difesa, il suo governo, la sua interna amministrazione,” by Doctor Pietro Vigo. Rome, 1898.

Florentines bought it in 1421, it was already blocked by the silting up of the sand. Malaria, too, helped to work its ruin. In 1541 it could only admit row-boats, and soon after was entirely abandoned. Leghorn took its place, and now not a single traveller that I ever could hear of comes out of his way to gaze upon the slender remnants of what was once a palpitating centre of mediæval life.

How vain it is in one small section of a small book to try and write of a city that was really a nation, but I have here spoken of three things connected with it of which the handiest sources say but little, and here and there, perhaps, some stray traveller may thank me for having directed his footsteps into fields fresh and pastures new to him.



VOLTERRA

#### IV

### VOLTERRA

VOLTERRA is far from the beaten track and difficult of access. Starting from Leghorn, the traveller has to traverse two branch lines and to change at two country junctions. It will take him three hours and more to do the fifty miles of railway that lie between the Tuscan port and Volterra Station. And Volterra Station is by no means Volterra city. The town itself is perched high upon a hill that no railway can ever hope to scale, and it needs a two hours' climb up a zig-zag road in a shaky diligence ere the traveller finds himself in "lordly Volaterræ." The diligence has set him down close by the *Albergo Nazionale*, the only hostelry of the city, which, be it said once for all, is the very pattern and model



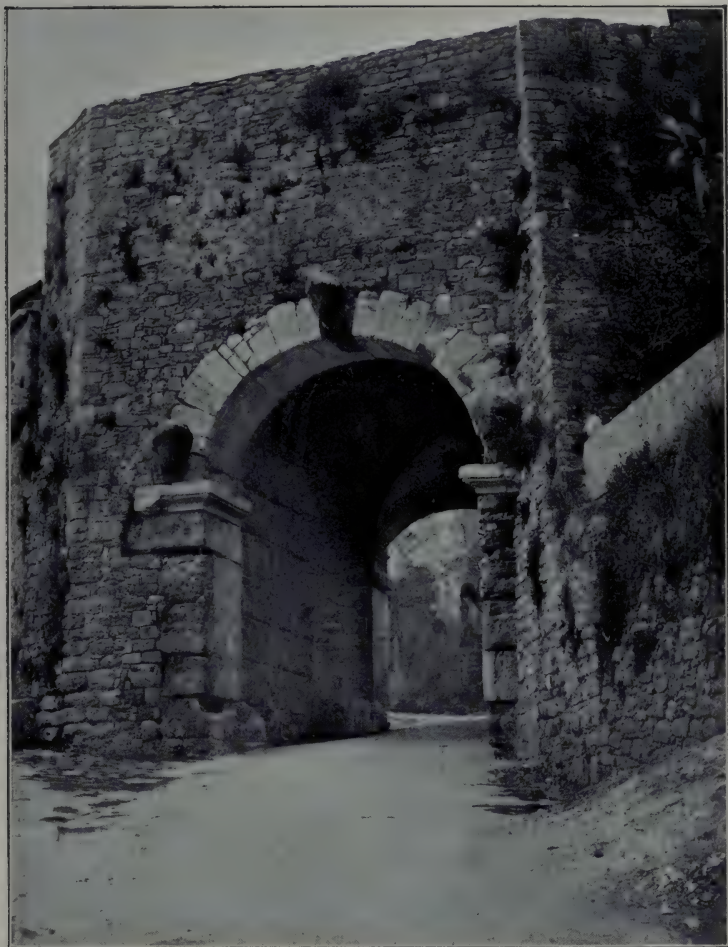
of an old-fashioned Tuscan inn, clean, comfortable, cheap, with a plain kitchen and a good, sound wine. So old-fashioned is it that they have neither waiter nor chambermaid. The inn is run entirely by the family, all of them smiling, genial, eager to serve. They speak no language save the purest Tuscan, but they have quick wits and a knack of divining the unlettered stranger's needs.

The wise traveller will not hurry away from Volterra. There is heaps to see. Four thousand years ago, six or seven hundred years before Troy was besieged, Volterra, queen of the Etruscan cities, was in the zenith of her glory, and vestiges of that glory still remain. In her Etruscan days the population of the city, which is now but 5500, must have been quite 100,000, and the huge Cyclopean walls which surrounded the ancient city were of a circumference of about 8000 yards. Portions of these walls, 40 feet high and 12 feet thick, still survive. The southerly side of the town forms a line with the site of the ancient walls, and it thus happens that one of the original Etruscan gates, which is still standing, the famous Porta all' Arco, forms also one of the entrances to the modern city. The gate is 25 feet high and  $12\frac{1}{2}$  feet deep; its arch is formed of nineteen huge blocks of stone, all without a vestige of cement or mortar. Outside the Porta San Francesco, a mile or more from

the town, are further remains of Etruscan walls showing the vast extent of the ancient city. Outside the Porta Fiorentina, to the north, is an Etruscan gate called the Porta di Diana, standing in solitary glory, which shows better than any other example the true character of Cyclopean masonry. Beyond the Porta di Diana is the Etruscan Necropolis (ask for *i Marmini* if you want to find it), and outside the Porta a Selci, beyond the Convent of San Girolamo, another Etruscan place of burial, with the urns in their places. The local Museum—Museo Guarnacci—a model of good order and perspicuous arrangement,<sup>1</sup> contains nearly six hundred Etruscan cinerary urns of curious and beautiful workmanship. Fully two-thirds of them are made of alabaster, and are thus a convincing witness to the time-honoured antiquity of the alabaster industry, which is still the mainstay and support of Volterra. Indeed the whole city is redolent of Etruscan traditions and Etruscan influences, and it would be impossible rightly to comprehend many of the existing features of Volterra—not even the alabaster industry—without bearing in mind its venerable origin.

Antiquity—intense antiquity—is the dominant note of the place. One of the historians of Vol-

<sup>1</sup> “Le Musée étrusque de Volterra est un des plus intelligemment distribués que j’ai visités;” so says M. Paul Bourget in his “Sensations d’Italie,” p. 20.



*Photograph by*

*ALINARI, Florence*

THE PORTA ALL' ARCO, VOLTERRA

*To face p. 182*





terra assigns Noah as its original founder, and Vul, the grandson of Noah (hence *Vol*-terra) as the maker of its greatness. The very country round about suggests the Flood—either that or a very early stage in the evolution of matter without form and void. Low bare hills and hillocks of clay, deeply fissured by the strong rains and riven and cracked by wind and sun, undulate on all sides with a certain savage grandeur that is not unimpressive. It seems like a prehistoric peep, and it would serve Mr. E. T. Reed admirably as a background; indeed, as we toil up the steep ascent in the diligence we almost expect to see some of his playful monsters sprawling on the mudhills, and leering at us with that genial desire to devour which he has conveyed with so much humour.

The city of Volterra is finely placed, and with its massive fortress and towers still has a very lordly bearing. It is 1714 feet above the sea-level, a height which effectually protects it from the malarial dangers of the close-lying Maremma. The strong bracing air which sweeps through this city set upon a hill is the foe of epidemic diseases, and leaves them no time to take root. The very view is invigorating—it is the sight that may be seen from almost any point of the Etruscan Littoral. To the west the Tyrrhenian Sea, Corsica, Elba, and the Tuscan Archipelago, and farther north the Gulf of Spezia and the

Ligurian coast; while to the north and north-east are the marble mountains of Carrara and a long range of snow-capped Apennines rising like a great grey crenulated wall in the middle of the long Peninsula.

The mediæval fortress of Volterra is now a formidable prison-house. When last I visited it there were 475 prisoners within its walls, all of them murderers. It is an uncanny sensation to look upon nearly five hundred human beings each one of whom has taken the life of at least one other human being. One hundred and forty-nine of them were condemned for life, and that meant murder of a brutal and cold-blooded description; the remainder were imprisoned for periods ranging from fifteen to thirty years, and that would mean murder with extenuating circumstances—murder the result of inconstancy in a sweetheart, of frailty in a wife, or faithlessness in a friend. The confinement is rigorously solitary and cellular; the exercise courts are cellular; there are cellular smithies and cellular workshops; nay, the very chapel is cellular. Two tiers of cells run one above the other, and the prisoner in each, while unable to see his fellow-convicts, can through a long narrow loophole see the altar and the priest who is saying mass. As I walked round the ramparts of the great fortress I could look down into the rows of high-walled exercise courts—not more than 10 feet by 10, I

should say—in each of which the convict was taking the hour of exercise which he is allowed daily. Every prisoner saluted respectfully, and showed his white teeth in a pleasant smile, glad at the sight of any fresh face. Italian prisons are models of good order and cleanliness, and the cheerfulness and natural patience of the Italian temperament does much to lighten the labour of Italian prison officials. The convicts get two full meals of beans, lentils, or *paste*, cooked in lard, and meat on Sundays and holidays. Every prisoner may spend 25 centesimi a day if he has it or can earn it; therefore wine is by no means an unknown luxury in the prison. I was there at Carnival time, and the prison clerks were busy with the correspondence entailed in acknowledging the receipt of money sent by relatives in the hope of introducing some of the merriment of the joyous season within the prison walls. The system of rigorous solitary confinement leads to frequent cases of madness. Indeed there is often talk of the Italian Government abolishing the system on account of the great expense of maintaining numerous criminal lunatic asylums. The cellular system does not admit of work being found for every one. What can a stone-mason or a husbandman do in a cell? Enforced idleness, the inability to read or write, the utterly blank existence, never exchanging a word with a soul except the chaplains and the guards, wholly

deprives many a poor wretch of wits which were none too strong to begin with. Yet the general impression of visiting any Italian prison is of treatment humane to excess.

And talking of mad-houses leads me to speak of the Convent of San Girolamo outside the Porta a Selci, which, from being a flourishing dwelling-place of the Sons of St. Francis, has been converted into a Pauper Asylum. The Convent became Government property in the suppression of 1866; the Friars are allowed to inhabit a small portion; the rest of the building is used as an Asylum for *women*. The windows of what is still part of the Convent look straight down upon the Asylum yard, where I saw a hundred or more of these poor wretches jabbering and grimacing in every stage of madness. It was a shuddering sight, and I could not but pity the poor Friars Minor, who are accorded a corner of their own house on the condition of receiving under their roof the most terrible of all guests. Many Italians do not seem to realise that such treatment of a Religious Order which has so greatly contributed to their country's glory affects us Englishmen unfavourably; indeed, that it passes our comprehension. All the world venerates Francis of Assisi, and however frail and faulty his sons may be, most of us can still see in them a reflex of their holy founder. His spirit was most manifest in the present case: 'tis



I who am grumbling and growling because my artistic sensibilities have been outraged—not a murmur, not a word of complaint, escaped any one of the two or three Friars of San Girolamo with whom I had speech.

One of the great sights of Volterra is *le Balze*, a portentous landslip, about a mile outside the Porta San Francesco. The subsidence is still active, and every year great masses of the sandy precipice fall away with a roar like thunder and a shock as of earthquake. All efforts to stop this devastation have been fruitless, and, indeed, all efforts to stop it have, I fancy, now been abandoned. In the seventeenth century the beautiful church of San Giusto, full of frescoes by Giotto, was swallowed up in the devouring earth. The new church of San Giusto, built to replace it on a spot further away from *le Balze*, is itself now fairly near the hungry precipice. The Camaldolese Abbey of San Salvatore, resting apparently on a surer foundation, has been left standing on the eastern side of the vasty chasm. It was “suppressed” and sold. The present owner has converted the long rows of cells into flats of two or three rooms each; the tenants are workers in the fields and artisans, who pay the modest rental of five livres (three shillings and fourpence) a month.

The Volterrani are a diligent, frugal, orderly race, reliable, honest, contented, and full of a

quiet dignity and sobriety that seems born of the place. Their pride sits well upon them, and finds its justification in every stone. People who look to Noah as the founder of their city, who daily go in and out of a gate that is 4000 years old, who dwell in the shadow of a building like the Palazzo dei Priori and beneath the walls of a noble fortress like the Rocca, who count among their great men St. Linus the immediate successor of St. Peter, and St. Leo surnamed the Great, a people which in A.D. 1900 is still engaged upon the same beautiful industry that it practised in 1900 B.C., has indeed motive for legitimate pride.

The Alabaster Industry is well worthy of consideration. Speaking generally, alabaster is nowhere to be found in the world outside the Province of Pisa. Sweeping as this statement may seem, it will yet stand the test of examination provided that we are speaking *secundum idem*. Oriental alabaster, the alabaster of Holy Scripture, which is found chiefly in Egypt, is not what is nowadays ordinarily understood by alabaster, but is really a species of marble: it is a carbonate of lime, whereas the alabaster of Volterra is a hydrated sulphate of lime, a distinction sufficiently emphatic to mark the sharp difference between the two. I lay stress upon this fact because it is important, as it is also interesting, to show that the rough material of an industry of world-wide celebrity and world-wide diffusion is



*Photograph by*

*ALINARI, Florence*

POPE ST. LINUS, BY LUCA DELLA ROBBIA, VOLTERRA

*To face p. 188*





really confined within a very limited corner of one particular country of the globe. At least the Volterrani maintain that none of the alabaster-like substances found in Derbyshire, Savoy, the Tyrol or Lombardy, are worthy of the name of alabaster.

There are two kinds of alabaster, and they are found in two separate districts of the Province. Veined, striped, and spotted alabaster, opaque creamy-white alabaster, grey bardiglio, and the rich yellow *agata*, are to be found in the caves lying round about Volterra. The white alabaster used in sculpture, a luminous and transparent stone of faintly cerulean tint, is only to be found in the valley of the Marmolaio near Castellina, some twenty miles distant from Volterra. These, in a rough division, are the two sorts; and these with clearer definition are the two districts.

I have been all over the "Venelle" Caves near Pomaia, the property of Signor Ferruccio Ciampolini and his brother, Signor Ottaviano. It is quite a remarkable experience, and one I recommend to the traveller in search of the unique. Seven or eight cavernous mouths at the foot of the gentle slope of the valley of the Marmolaio lead us into a network of galleries which penetrate far into the bowels of the earth, and whose internal communications running alongside the valley are over 1700 yards in length. These galleries are all the result of fruitful excavation.

Begun only some two hundred years ago, they seem quite a matter of recent incident in the history of an industry where everything is so ancient. The descent is at first spiral, and this enables the stratification to be very clearly observed. It is sufficiently curious and puzzling to the unscientific mind. First a great mass of hard crystallised limestone rock, some twenty-five feet in depth, called by the workers "il masso" or "la panchina," and then a stratum of greyish-blue marl of a depth of four feet; again the mass of limestone, and again the stratum of marl. Four of these double strata have been laid bare in parts of the Venelle Caves, and seven or eight in the Maestà Caves of Castellina on the opposite side of the valley.

It is these huge masses of limestone that form the matrix of the alabaster nodules, which are found embedded within it at irregular distances. The nodules lie in two, three, and even four layers, one above the other, and a thin streak of argillaceous matter mixed with fibrous limestone, forming what is called the "traversone," marks the divisions of the layers, and serves in some measure as a guide to the whereabouts of the blocks. At the end of each cavern you will find two or three men working away with their small T-shaped picks by the dim light of the unprotected flaming oil-lamps of Etruscan pattern which, by a singular tenacity of tradition, are

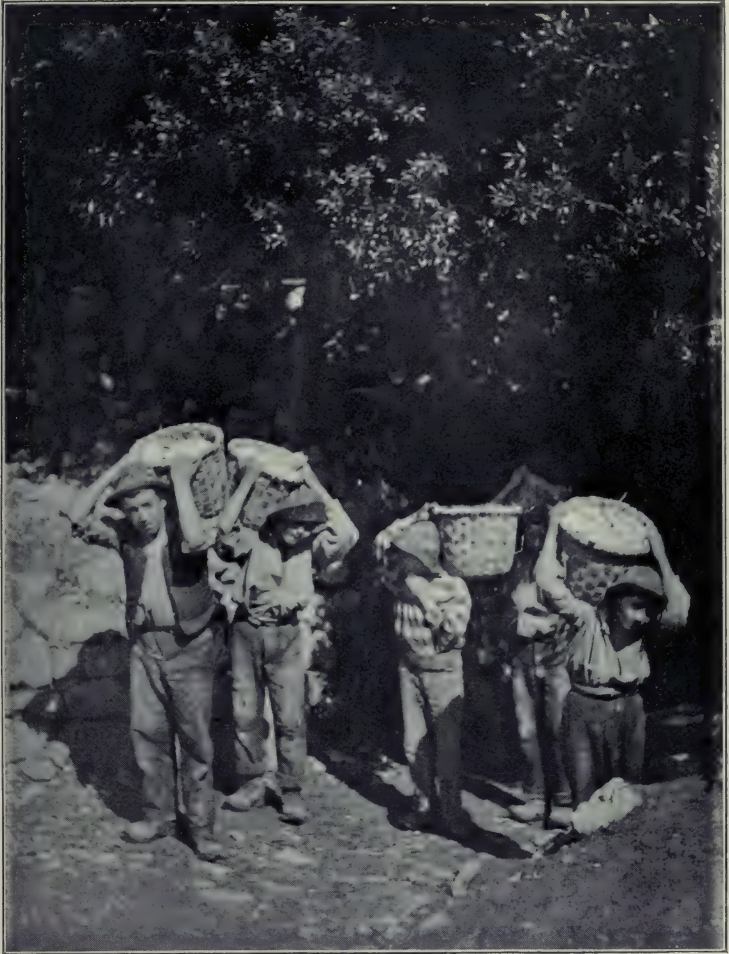
still in use in the district. In one case the block of alabaster will be already projecting from its bed of limestone, and the operator is carefully picking away all round it until he shall have extracted the complete block. In another, search is still being made for alabaster, and the workman is vigorously beating down the wall of limestone until he lights upon what looks like the white nose of a nodule. Bringing his lamp close to the glistening patch, and shading it with his hand, the fine translucence of a piece of genuine alabaster is thrown out into startling relief, and the operator begins to pick gingerly so as not to injure his prize. When the "masso" is over-obstinate in yielding the wished-for nodules, when, that is to say, there seems a likelihood of much picking in the limestone without treasure trove, two holes are drilled in the rock, and blasting on a miniature scale is resorted to. The average weight of the blocks is 6 cwts., but blocks from 17 to 20 cwts. are of common occurrence. Signor Ottaviano Ciampolini in 1894 sent a block to the Antwerp Exhibition that weighed 58 cwts. and measured  $5\frac{1}{2}$  feet. But such a find is altogether phenomenal. It will thus be seen that it is impossible to sculpt life-size figures in alabaster.

The excavators only work six hours a day, and never for more than two hours at a time. The bad air of the caves renders this regula-

tion imperative, for there are no shafts sunk anywhere, and the atmosphere of the remoter portions of the caves is hot and stifling. Still the occupation seems to be a healthy one, and one of the foremen in the Venelle Caves told me that the workers all lived to a good old age. They have a belief, too, that the fine white alabaster powder which they inhale in the process of picking—and they must swallow many a kilo in the course of a lifetime—has strong hygienic properties. Work is begun at seven in the morning and continued to nine o'clock; is resumed from eleven to one; and again from three in the afternoon till five o'clock. The débris of the limestone matrix is removed from the caves in baskets by boys (locally known as *ciuchetti*, i.e. young donkeys). Both their hands are occupied in carrying the basket, and they are thus unable to light their way up with one of the flaming lamps, but the little fellows, with something of the instinct of bats, have learned to come up securely in the dark; the greater moisture of the centre of the path is a sure guide to their bare feet. They account themselves passing rich and happy on a wage of sixpence a day.

Water is a great enemy to the excavating operations. There are several bits of ingenious engineering in the caves for carrying off the water which has been struck, but deep wells and





*Photograph by*

Mrs. CARMICHAEL

A GROUP OF CIUCHETTI IN THE ALABASTER CAVES, VOLTERRA

*To face p. 192*



pools exist in the cavernous recesses which would be a grave danger to the stranger who should venture into these labyrinths alone. In most of the galleries a man of six foot can walk comfortably without stooping, but in others, where the water has oozed through and reduced the paths to impassable mud, the limestone débris has been thickly laid down as pavement, with the result that the height of the gallery has been considerably lowered. There are some twelve principal caves in the Castellina district, and perhaps a similar number of known outcrops, which if worked would, it is supposed, yield the same pure white diaphanous alabaster. Geologically the caves belong to the later Miocene and earlier Pliocene systems. Professor Capellini, somewhere about the year 1860, was the first to discover in them the presence of fossil remains, notably the minute fresh-water crustacea *Cypris*.<sup>1</sup>

I was so fascinated by my experiences in the Venelle Caves, that I also visited some of the caves of the Volterra district. But they seem small and insignificant after the grandiose galleries of Castellina and Pomaia. The stratification is similar, and the method of excavation is

<sup>1</sup> Not a soul ever seems to come to see these wonderful caves. Rosignano is the station, and I dare avouch, from my own experience, that even the chance traveller will receive a hearty welcome from Signor Ferruccio Ciampolini.

similar, and they might have interested me if I had not just come from Pomaia.

The worked alabaster industry is likewise divided into two strongly differentiated branches—firstly, sculpture, that is to say, sculptured representations of the human form; and secondly, the miscellaneous industry, that is to say, the countless other objects manufactured at Volterra, such as vases, ewers, pillars and stands, baskets, clock-cases, frames, toilet necessities, animals, fruit, ash-trays, candelabra, crucifixes, holy-water stoups, and the like. These two divisions of the worked industry correspond also with the two main divisions of the rough material, and coincide with the two territorial divisions which I have endeavoured to indicate, for the alabaster used in what is called sculpture comes exclusively from the Castellina district, while the alabaster used in the miscellaneous industry comes chiefly from the neighbourhood of Volterra. There is yet another point of division: nearly all the best sculpture of alabaster is now carried on at Florence, whereas the miscellaneous industry is almost wholly confined to Volterra city.

Walking along the by-streets of the city the ear is arrested by the clinking of little hammers and the grating rasp of files, and looking in at a doorway the passer-by will see two or three men busily engaged, with all the absorption of



true artists, in fashioning the various parts of a vase or a flower-basket. These men may be a father and two sons, or an uncle and two nephews, or three men united in an informal partnership, or (very rarely) one man employing two others, and they usually unite in themselves the qualifications required in the production of a vase, one being a turner (*tornitore*) who gives it shape, the other a modeller (*squadratore*) who fashions its pillar and base, the third a decorator (*ornatista*) who carves the decorative adjuncts of fruit and flowers. The master-worker of past days, with his busy band of workers and apprentices, has disappeared, and it is from these small workshops that the articles of the miscellaneous alabaster industry now go forth to the world. The workers sell chiefly direct to the proprietors of the Volterra "*gallerie*." A proprietor will bring a block of alabaster and a block of agata to the workshops and say: Make me a vase and a stand out of these; or the worker will purchase the rough material himself, fashion different articles, and carry them to the "*gallerie*" on the chance of a sale. Then there is the waif and stray of the trade, often a mere youth, who lives a very precarious existence, buying a small block of alabaster when he has a few *soldi* to spare, working it into various articles, and selling them when he can to the *gallerie* or to the chance traveller (a *rara avis*

in Volterra<sup>1</sup>), or carrying them even, when times are very bad, to the neighbouring farmhouses, where he is glad to exchange his works of art for bread and beans and a little thin red wine.

The sculpture of alabaster used at one time to be carried on principally at Volterra, but about a quarter of a century ago this branch of the industry migrated to Florence, where it took root very firmly, and speedily assumed considerable proportions. There are six or seven important *gallerie* in Florence where the sculpture, admirably arranged, is on view to all the world. They also do a large export business, chiefly with the United States and Germany; Americans take most of the modern sculpture, and Germans the copies from classical models. The sculpture is subjected to a very simple whitening process: the figure is immersed in water, which is gradually raised to boiling-point and then allowed to become quite cold again. Great care has to be exercised, as too much heat would reduce the alabaster to plaster, and a too sudden exposure to the air would cause it to crack. This process deadens the transparency of the alabaster, and gives it the appearance of fine white marble.

The alabaster industry is picking up again after a long period of adversity. I would that,

<sup>1</sup> Only about two hundred and fifty travellers—people, that is, who come to see the sights and antiquities of the place—visit Volterra in the course of a year.

with a renewal of prosperity, there would also come a change in the debased taste which prevails. In the sculpture classicism, late and early, Greek, Roman, and Canovan runs riot, together with products of the flashy, vulgar modernity and would-be realism dear to Philistines, such as roguish dancing girls, coquettish diving girls, faultlessly clad pifferari, impossibly spruce lazzeroni, improbably prepossessing monelli, and a host of other creations which cause something like a shudder when contemplated in cold alabaster. In the miscellaneous worked industry of Volterra the prevailing taste is little less deplorable. The elaborate, florid design of the vases is such as our grandmothers in the thirties and forties were wont to delight in, but of the severer, simpler taste of the present day Volterra is all unconscious. There is, moreover, a certain perversion of taste in the selection of the objects worked up. A picture frame, for instance, is an incongruous and uncomfortable object when worked in alabaster. The same may be said of the countless little cannons with guns of *agata* and carriages of alabaster, and also of the alabaster representations in unblushingly realistic colours of fruit and flowers and birds. But the climax of incongruity is reached when the worker—recognising that you are a son of the nation that rules the waves—proudly produces an alabaster model of a modern twin-screw fast cruiser, fully rigged

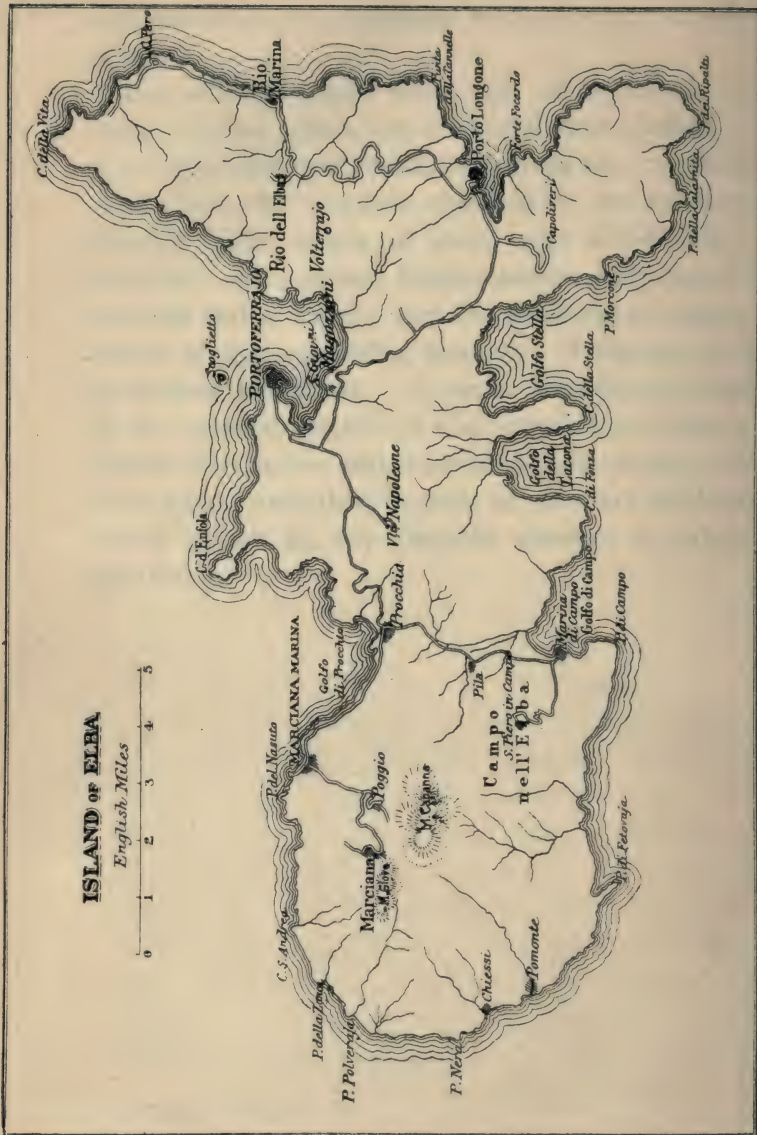
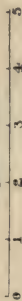
and mounted, and equipped with all the panoply of war!

But while I make these few strictures on the faults in taste which are exhibited in the industry, it is impossible sufficiently to admire the exquisite skill which the workers manifest in the meanest objects. The secret of swift, sure deft-handedness has, more or less unconsciously, been passed on from father to son, and the workers are justly proud of the venerable antiquity of the art and its mellow traditions. Volterra need fear no rival in her special branch of the industry, for she is secure in customs and traditions that cannot well be copied, and this branch of the art at least would perish in any forcible attempt at transplantation.





## English Miles





ELBA

V

PORTOFERRAIO AND THE ISLAND  
OF ELBA

ELBA, though easy of access as compared with some of the interesting inland towns of Tuscany, seems to be little known, as it certainly is little frequented by English travellers. To take therefore, in the first instance—with apologies to the well-informed—a few facts of elementary geography.

Elba is the principal island of the Tyrrhenian Archipelago. It is situate ten miles east of the nearest point on the mainland of Italy, and fifty miles south-west of Leghorn. Its superficies is eighty-six square miles; the extent of its sinuous coast, some seventy-one miles; its greatest length, between the perpendiculars (so to speak), eighteen

miles; its greatest breadth, east of Cape Pina, six miles;<sup>1</sup> its population some twenty-five thousand souls. The coast is steep and rocky; the whole island one intricate mountain chain; the soil ferruginous and very fertile; the climate mild and healthy. Portoferraio, on the north coast, is the capital city, and the island contains four other communes—Marciana, Rio, Porto Longone, and Campo. Administratively, Elba forms part of the Province of Leghorn; ecclesiastically, it is within the mainland diocese of Massa Marittima. The King is represented in the island by a Sub-Prefect; the Bishop of Massa by a Vicar-General. Excavating in the important iron ore mines, working the extensive Government *Saline* or salt-pans, sea-fishing and seafaring, agriculture and viticulture, are among the chief industries of its hardy, laborious, and orderly population.

There are two ways of getting to Elba. You can go from the small port of Piombino (four hours by train from Leghorn, six hours from Rome), whence a little packet-boat, taking an hour in the transit, runs twice daily to Portoferraio. Or, what is much pleasanter, you can go by Florio-Rubattino boat twice a week direct

<sup>1</sup> Englishmen will be able to form a better idea of the size of Elba by the following statistics:—The area of Malta is 95 square miles; of the Isle of Wight, 145; and of the Isle of Man, 227 square miles.

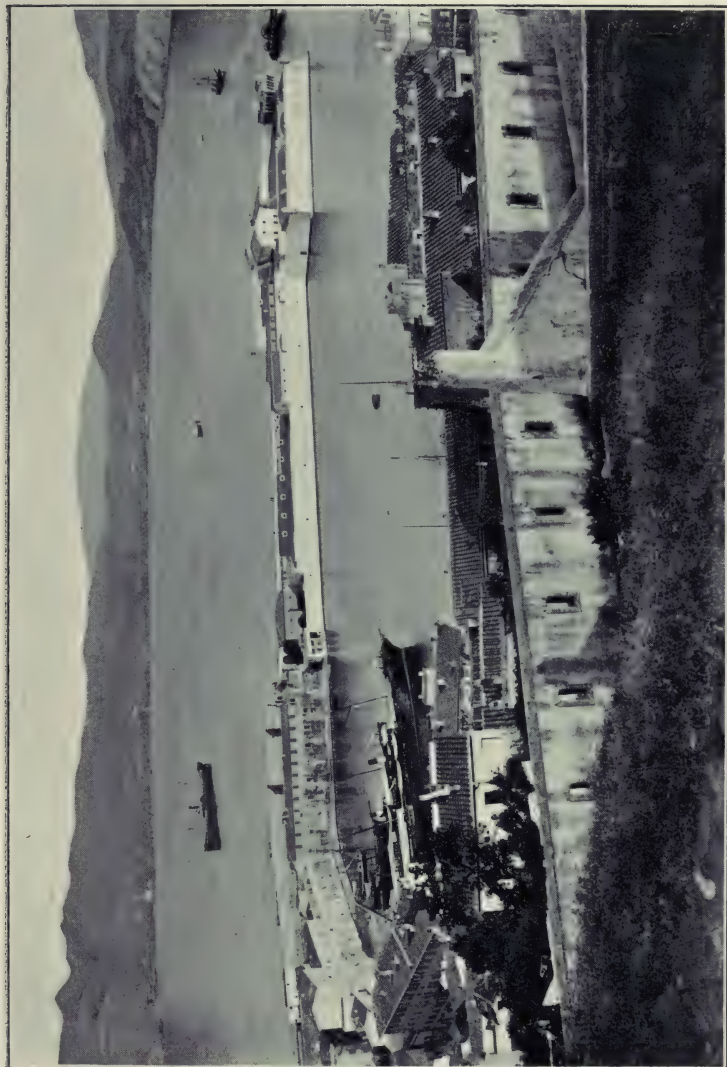


from Leghorn. This is one of the most delightful sea-trips imaginable. The steamer touches first at the island of Gorgona, then at the island of Capraia, proceeds thence to Marciana in Elba, and so along the splendid island-coast to Portoferraio. The whole journey, which is done by day, takes some eight hours. Sometimes—a contingency to be avoided—a gang of convicts, chained together and surveillanced by files of carabineers, will be among your fellow-passengers, for Gorgona and Capraia, as also Portoferraio and Porto Longone in Elba, and the island of Pianosa beyond, are important Italian convict establishments. Their villainous scrubby faces, in contrast with their farcical costume of striped fustian and jaunty little cap, produce a gruesome, shuddering effect as they sprawl there on the lower deck munching great hunks of bread, or playing at chuck-farthing to pass the time. But the experience is interesting, more especially if the brigadier is easy-going and does not resent your having speech with his engaging charges. Sometimes the boats that row out to the steamer at Gorgona or Capraia are manned by convicts, veritable galley-slaves they seem thus afloat. They have come to fetch off the new arrivals to their settlement, or it may be to bring aboard some prisoners who are changing. There are at the present moment some nine hundred and fifty convicts in the island of Elba, and nearly

two thousand in the whole of the Tuscan Archipelago.

Soon the finely-placed lighthouse of Portoferraio comes in sight, and, rounding the point, one of the finest sights in all Italy breaks upon our astonished view—the vast, deep inland bay of Portoferraio, which might comfortably ensconce in securest shelter the whole of Her Majesty's great navy. One turn more, round the point called La Linguella, which is entirely occupied by the convict establishment, and we are in the actual harbour of Portoferraio, facing the picturesque little town with its houses piled high above one another, amphitheatrically grouped, and crowned by majestic old fortresses.

In Portoferraio the traveller will make his headquarters. There is but one hostelry here into which the English traveller will venture, the Albergo delle Api, or Bees, so called from the famous charge in the Buonaparte family arms. Baedeker calls it "fair," and as this has somewhat of the sound of a damnatory clause, I will make bold to call it "good." Good it will certainly seem to the real traveller accustomed to the world's by-ways. It is rough certainly; rough it will seem to the pampered sojourner on the Riviera; but it is clean, and a slight knowledge of Italian will procure you simple, wholesome fare. In the remotest parts of Tuscany you can always eat well if you ask for a "bis-



*Photograph by*

THE BAY OF PORTOFERRAIO

PICCINNINI, Portoferraio

*To face p. 202*





tecca sui ferri," or beefsteak off the grill. Add in warning tones "senz'aglio" (without garlic). "È naturale," the serving-man will reply, though but for your warning the grill would have been soused in what is said to be the best of digestives were but the British stomach already seasoned to it. And beware, too, of sage (*salvia*), with which they love to lard a plain roast of beef in quantities, so as to make it tasty forsooth!

In Elba—except the deep footprints of Napoleon, and I leave these alone for the present—there are scarcely any "sights." There is, of course, the "sight" of Nature at her best and beautifullest, in forms unique to herself and which can only be seen in Elba. But the traveller should not neglect to ramble about the wonderful old fortifications which dominate both land and sea, and made Portoferraio in times past practically impregnable. Until recently he might wander there at his sweet will, but now a permit (never refused) from the officer in command of the few troops is necessary. The fortifications are to-day destitute of even a single cannon to salute the warships which occasionally call, but there is no doubt that Portoferraio, with its splendid bay and great natural advantages, might be made to contribute powerfully to the safety of the now defenceless Tuscan coast. But modern Italy has her hands full, and her treasury empty. She must wait years for the security which helps

nations to develop; but one of her first tasks in the better days that we all hope are in store for her, will be to make of Elba a second La Maddalena.

From Portoferraio endless and delightful excursions may be made. It is wise, and it certainly is pleasant too, to use boats as much as possible. The roads, though excellent, are few and tortuous, carriage-hire is dear, and hired horseflesh inferior. Most enjoyable is the sail along the northern coast to Marciana Marina. There is a good inn here where you can sleep in cleanliness and comfort: best bedroom, one franc; second best, fifty centimes; or, if the fancy take you, a room may be shared with commercial travellers at thirty centesimi a bed. Here, too, as elsewhere, you may be sure of a wholesome meal (grilled beefsteaks), and the same pure yellow wine of the island that you get everywhere, rich in iron and tonic properties.

From Marciana there are some beautiful and interesting mountain excursions—to Poggio, for example, or to Marciana Alta. Do not go in company of a botanist, or you will take all day in reaching your destination. Never have I seen, in the same narrow corner of the earth, so wonderful, so varied an array of wild flowers. I was (unfortunately) in the company of a botanist who lost his head as only the scientific can, mumbled the names of flowers of which I had never heard,

of scrubby weeds that used to grow but will no longer grow in England, and of ferns that had no right to grow in the altitude we found them. The cactus hedges and hedgerows of prickly pears in Elba are a sight which even the most unbotanical mind is constrained to admire, and the richly embroidered carpets of poppies, borage, scabious, dog-daisies, marigolds, vetches—richer and more deeply coloured than the English variety, red, blue, violet, yellow, mauve—afford a picture which the common observer will enjoy even more than the greedy herbalist.

From Marciana, by way of Poggio, you may reach the highest point of Elba, Monte Capanne, 3343 feet above the sea-level—no mean altitude for so small an island, and a sufficiently stiff climb. From the summit on a carefully chosen day you may see what the birds' eyes view—the whole island girt by the deep blue sea, in the north the islands of Gorgona and Capraia, in the south the island of Pianosa and the rock of Monte Cristo known to readers of Dumas. Seek out a guide at Poggio. It is a pleasant variation to descend on the other side of the Capanne to Campo, and thence you can drive to your natural headquarters, the Albergo delle Api at Portoferraio.

But there is perhaps, after all, one "sight" in Elba. It has been celebrated by Aristotle and Virgil ("*Insula inexhaustis Chalybum generosa*

*metallis*," Æn., Lib. x.), and everybody goes to see it: the rich, splendid iron-ore mines of Riomarina, chief prop and backbone of Elban industrial life. To drive to Riomarina by the winding road through Porto Logone and Rio d'Elba is a lengthy matter (fully three hours) and costly beyond reason. It is quicker, more economic far, and far more pleasant, to take a sailing-boat across the bay to the little agglomeration of houses known as I Magazzini. There, if an hour and a half's walk along a roughish mule path—the moiety of it a gradual ascent—should prove too much, a horse can be had all the way to Rio for two livres, or you can take the horse half-way to where the descent begins for one livre. It is a beautiful walk, but here again it is as well to leave the botanist behind at the inn, or send him round by carriage. There is the same wealthy profusion of wild flowers, and there are shrubs and roots on inaccessible crags which he will risk his neck and disturb your peace of mind to get hold of. Midway you pass the towering summit of the Volterraio, crowned with the fine ruins of its keep and castle. Elba, perhaps, more than any other civilised spot in the Mediterranean, was troubled in mediæval times with the ravages of the Barbary pirates. When all else failed, and the inroad of them could no longer be stemmed, the islanders took refuge in the Castle of the Volterraio, and there



is no record of their ever having been dislodged from that impregnable stronghold. Even Barbarossa failed in the attempt.

The iron-ore mines are Government property ; indeed the general land laws of Italy differ in a most important respect in Elba. On the continent the landlord is proprietor of soil and subsoil, on the island of the soil only : for the Government reserve to themselves the right of appropriating all further discoveries of iron ore. This law survives from feudal times, when the Princes of Piombino were owners of the mines, and it was continued by the Grand Dukes of Tuscany when they acquired the whole of the island in 1815. The Elbani—who are, strangely enough, regard being had to their isolated position and simple habits, the most intensely “modern” of the Italians<sup>1</sup>—are keenly alive to this difference to their detriment in the law.

The Government lease the mines at a handsome royalty to the highest bidder. Hitherto the lease had been of the shortest—seven, five, or even three years. But in 1897 a new departure was decided upon, and the mines were offered for a period of twenty years, with the right to extend to twenty-five years. After an

<sup>1</sup> I chanced to go over to Elba a few weeks after poor Cavallotti had been killed in his duel. There was already a Via Cavallotti, not in the capital, but in the remote commune of Marciana Marina.

exciting bid the lease was acquired by a lucky young islander, the Cavaliere Ubaldo Tonietti, at the high royalty of seven and a quarter francs a ton on all ore exported, and fifty centimes a ton on the ore used in Italy. Blast-furnaces exist at Fallonica on the mainland; others are to be set up in Elba itself; and with the ever-increasing industrial activity of Italy, there is the possibility that a great many tons may be disposed of on which only the trifling royalty of fifty centimes need be paid to the Government. The lessee is limited by the terms of his contract to an annual output of 250,000 tons, and if this were all exported abroad, it will be seen that the Italian Government would net for itself the handsome sum of 1,787,500 livres in royalties. In July 1899 Signor Tonietti parted with his lease to a large company. The deposits of the ore are superficial, and can be worked with great economy and despatch. Some experts have stated that the mines will become exhausted in about thirty years' time.

By far the greater part of the ore is consumed in English blast-furnaces, where it is highly prized, and by far the greater part of it leaves the island in British bottoms. In 1897 some sixty British vessels loaded ore at Rio, as opposed to sixteen foreign vessels. There is no port at Rio; the steamers are loaded from lighters in the roadstead, but the operation is carried out

with surprising celerity. With the increased consumption of ore in Italian furnaces, there is likely to be little enough left, in the future, for English requirements.

To me one of the most attractive (*simpatico*) spots in the island is Porto Longone, on the east coast. This was for two centuries a Spanish possession, and it still bears a distinctly Spanish impress.<sup>1</sup> Spanish and Italian blood mix well, and produce a fine race. And so the inhabitants of Porto Longone seem to convey an immediate impression of all good qualities—courtesy, cheerfulness, intelligence, and even physique. Hard by the picturesque Spanish fort is a terrible *Ergastolo*, or prison, where murderers, condemned to absolutely solitary confinement (for capital punishment does not exist in Italy), drag out their miserable existence, and often enough succumb to the dread and hopeless severity of the system. The natural harbour of Longone is one of the finest and safest in Italy.

A word on the history of Elba. I do not propose with a modern writer to go back to the Stone Age and the Etruscans, to Aristotle and Diodorus Siculus. It is sufficient to say that at the beginning of the eleventh century the island was a possession of the Republic of Pisa, that at the close of the thirteenth century it passed by

<sup>1</sup> See the chapter, "Some Tuscan Strongholds: the Spanish Praesidia."

force of arms to the sister Republic of Genoa, and once more back again to the Pisans. In 1392 it became by treachery the possession of Jacopo Appiani, Secretary to the unhappy Pietro Gambacorti, Lord of Pisa, and it remained undivided in the Appiani family until 1545, having, however, been made a fief of the Holy Roman Empire in 1509. In 1545 the Emperor Charles V. gave Portoferraio and some three miles of the territory beyond it to Cosimo I., Grand Duke of Tuscany; in 1603 Philip III. of Spain acquired Porto Longone and the castellated hill-tops around, which passed in 1759 to the Bourbon Kings of Naples; the remaining and far greater part of the island, including the rich iron-ore mines, continued, as a fief, in the hands of the Appiani until, on their extinction, it was acquired by the Ludovisi, and subsequently, through marriage, by the Buoncompagni family. It will thus be seen that this small corner of much-divided Italy enjoyed the sway of three separate masters.

Indeed it is a curious and interesting, if somewhat intricate, problem to consider the position of Elba territorially and from the point of view of allegiance, at the end of last century, when the European war was at its height. Elba had three immediate masters, as I have said, but only one of them was absolute—the other two had feudal overlords.



1. Ferdinand III., Grand Duke of Tuscany, held Portoferraio as a fief from Francis II., the Emperor.

2. Ferdinand IV., King of Naples, held Porto Longone as a possession of his House.

3. Don Antonio Buoncompagni, Prince of Piombino, held the remainder of the island as a fief from Charles IV. of Spain, who in turn derived the fief from the Emperor.

This then was the curiously complicated position of allegiance when the French came to Elba in 1799:—

1. The immediate master of Portoferraio was at peace with France, while his feudal sovereign, the Emperor, was at war.

2. The master of Porto Longone, Ferdinand IV., was at war with France.

3. The vassal Prince of Piombino was at peace with France, so was his immediate overlord, Charles of Spain, but Charles's feudal sovereign in turn was at war with France. It makes the head spin, and assuredly the territorial complications of Italy in the past, and the necessity of understanding them, must have largely contributed to develop the sharp wits for which Italians are famous.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Whoever has a mind to see for himself, in detail, the pretty imbroglio that resulted from this state of things, should consult an interesting work, a perfect marvel of an accumulation of minutiae, "*I Francesi all'Elba nel 1799*," by the late Vincenzo Mellini Ponçe de Leon, Livorno, Giusti, 1890, pp. vi-320.

In 1814 Elba was for the first time in its history to become an independent principality, united under one lord who lived upon its soil. The Treaty of Fontainebleau stripped Napoleon of all his ill-gotten possessions save this little island (for Elba, with Tuscany, formed part of the French Empire), which, in the words of the treaty, was to form "sa vie durant, une principauté séparée qui sera possédée par lui en toute propriété et souveraineté." I wonder why English schoolboys always speak as if Napoleon were a prisoner in Elba in the same sense that he was in St. Helena: can it be that their text-books tell them so? For Napoleon was nothing of the kind: he was the independent sovereign of a new State, theoretically free in his actions, and possessing his own army and navy, his court and ministers, his capital city and special coat-of-arms and flag.

Napoleon<sup>1</sup> arrived at Portoferraio on the 3rd May 1814 on board his Majesty's frigate *Undaunted*, and landed the day following, being greeted from the forts with a salute of twenty-

<sup>1</sup> I know it is very incorrect to speak of Buonaparte by his Christian name, just as if he were in very deed a lawful sovereign with a full and undisputed right to rule in the place of those whom he dispossessed. But it is hopeless to attempt to change a universal bad habit now firmly rooted in history, and it is eloquent testimony to the real greatness of Napoleon that he has been able to force his Christian name on to the history of the world. Cromwell could never have got himself called Oliver.

one guns. On the voyage out he had devised a coat-of-arms and flag for his new kingdom: argent, on a bend gules, three bees or. The flag was first hoisted on the *Undaunted* in Portoferraio harbour, and when afterwards floating on the citadel, was solemnly saluted by the English frigate. The Elbans welcomed Napoleon with transports of delight. It was natural enough, perhaps. Their island took a sudden dignity and importance in the eyes of all the world; for sovereign they had got the greatest conqueror of the time, famous, too, for his administrative abilities. He was, moreover, reputed to be bringing a vast treasure with him. The people looked forward to a new era of plenty and prosperity. And they were not disappointed.

The very next day after landing Napoleon was up at five in the morning, making a minute inspection of his capital city, and from that moment he never relaxed his efforts to improve the condition of Elba. He made roads, planted trees, built houses and a theatre, and strengthened the fortifications. He developed trade and all local industries, and improved the system of working the mines at Rio. He formed an army of fifteen hundred men (eight hundred of them were of his "Old Guard"), and a navy of five ships, the largest of them a brig, in which he afterwards returned to France for the memorable Hundred Days. His budget was not much more than

100,000 francs, and the vast treasure of which the Elbans gossiped was only about three million francs. Nothing is more interesting than to trace the daily life of this extraordinary man in his miniature Empire. He was constantly busied for the welfare of the State, and confesses to having been remarkably content and happy.

Napoleon's reign in Elba lasted little over ten months. He started for France, quite openly, on the 26th February 1815 with a flotilla of ten ships and nine hundred men, lord of the smallest kingdom, commander of the smallest army and navy, that ever undertook the conquest of the world, and lived to look back with regret from his island prison in the Atlantic to his island kingdom in the Tyrrhenian Sea.<sup>1</sup>

Visitors to Elba all go to see the little villa of San Martino, Napoleon's country house, situated about three miles from Portoferraio. It is a modest and insignificant structure, having but a dozen rooms, but it is splendidly placed in face of the great bay, and commands a fine view. Prince Anatole Demidoff, whose wife was a sister of Jerome Buonaparte, bought it in 1851. In front of it he built a museum two hundred and

<sup>1</sup> Mons. Marcellin Pellet's "*Napoléon à l'Ile d'Elbe*" is a noteworthy and very instructive work which does not seem to have obtained all the attention in England that it deserves. Mons. Pellet was the first writer to make use of the archives of the French Consulate in Leghorn, which are rich in the reports of French spies upon the sayings and doings of the ruler of Elba.





*Photograph by*

PICCINNINI, *Portoferraio*

THE VILLA SAN MARTINO AND DEMIDOFF MUSEUM

*To face p. 214*



seven feet long, the roof of which forms a garden terrace to the villa, and herein he placed his wonderful collection of Napoleon relics and memorials. It was a genuine "sight," and drew crowds of travellers. The shell of the Museum still exists, but its contents, alas! were sold and scattered by the Prince's heir. In the villa itself there is, I think, but a bed, a table, and a chair left of Napoleon's belongings. The whole property has now been acquired by Signor Ubaldo Toniatti, the late lessee of the mines, and he has put it in fine order. A permit to see the villa, costing one franc, must be obtained in the town before starting.

In Portoferraio itself, Napoleon's town house, known as *I Mulini*—insignificant enough that also—still exists, and is now occupied by the *Genio Militare*. It is situated at the top of the town between the forts La Stella and Il Falcone, and overlooks the open sea to the north. From the garden there is a path descending to a little cove where Napoleon used to bathe. In the Church of the Misericordia is a mask of Napoleon, said to be one of the only two copies in existence, the other being at *Les Invalides*. Every 5th May, the anniversary of Napoleon's death, a mass, attended by the civil and military authorities, is said for the repose of the soul of the former sovereign of the island, and five hundred francs' worth of bread is distributed to the poor. Prince

Anatole Demidoff is the founder of both the mass and the charity.

The persistency and potency of the Napoleonic legend in the island is illustrated by a curious and, I think, little known fact of recent history. After the disaster of Sedan the Elbans heard the rumour that Napoleon III. on his release would choose their island as his future residence. On the 1st November 1870 an address to the fallen Emperor, signed by fifty-five notables of the island, was drawn up, offering him hospitality and a warm and loyal welcome. The address was sent by the Mayor of Portoferraio to Count Brassier de Saint-Simon, Envoy at Florence of the Germanic Confederation, praying that his Excellency would be pleased to charge himself with its safe delivery to the Emperor, then at Wilhelmshöhe. Count Brassier seems to have been unable or unwilling to undertake the task, and to have been a very long while in coming to a decision, for it was not until the 1st March 1871 that the Mayor of Portoferraio finally transmitted the address direct to the Emperor himself. It runs as follows :—

“PORTOFERRAIO, 1 *novembre*, 1870.

“SIRE,—Les habitants de la ville de Portoferraio ont été vivement émus à la nouvelle que votre Majesté pour rétablir sa santé avait choisi le séjour de l’Ile d’Elbe.



“ Les souvenirs de 1814 et 1815, qui ne se sont jamais effacés, ont fait battre avec violence le cœur de ceux entre nous qui ont eu le bonheur de connaître et d’admirer de près le glorieux fondateur de votre dynastie, comme de ceux qui, ayant vu le jour plus tard, ont connu le grand homme par les traces bienfaisantes qu’il a laissées chez nous.

“ Le successeur de Napoléon I<sup>er</sup>, celui qu’un immense malheur vient de frapper, ne peut être reçu dans notre ville qu’avec la plus grande reconnaissance. Venez, Sire, nous serons fiers d’accorder l’hospitalité et d’entourer de nos soins le parent de notre Souverain, l’homme à qui notre Italie bien aimée doit en grande partie son affranchissement.

“ Nous avons l’honneur d’être, Sire, de votre Majesté les très humbles et très obéissants serviteurs.”

(Fifty-five Signatures.)

And this was Napoleon’s graceful reply :—

“ WILHELMSHÖHE, 10 mars, 1871.

“ MONSIEUR LE SYNDIC,—J’ai reçu l’adresse par laquelle les habitants de Portoferraio m’offrent l’hospitalité dans leur ville, pensant que j’avais choisi l’Ile d’Elbe pour y fixer ma résidence. Quoique cette nouvelle n’ait jamais eu aucun fondement je suis heureux du témoignage

de sympathie qu'elle a provoqué et dont j'ai été vivement touché.

“Veuillez, Monsieur le Syndic, vous faire auprès de vos concitoyens l'interprète de mes remerciements et croire à mes sentiments dévoués.

NAPOLÉON.”

This little incident, as far as I am aware, has never been mentioned in any Life of Napoleon III., and is certainly worthy of being put on record.

Much might be written of the island of Elba, of its historic memories, its natural beauties, its busy industries, its peaceful and charming inhabitants, did but tyrant space permit. Better far, though, than reading about Elba is to go and see for oneself. Why so few travellers visit the island is a constant puzzle to the few who know it; but in an age of travel, the time cannot be far distant when Elba will get her full measure of the appreciation due to so delightful and unique a corner of the civilised world.

A TUSCAN SANCTUARY:  
MOUNT LA VERNA





## A TUSCAN SANCTUARY: MOUNT LA VERNA

Salve Mons felix, Sinai felicior illo  
Scripsit ubi Moysi jura sacrata Deus,  
Te super apparens Crucifixus luce refulsit,  
Francisco oranti Stigmata sacra dedit.

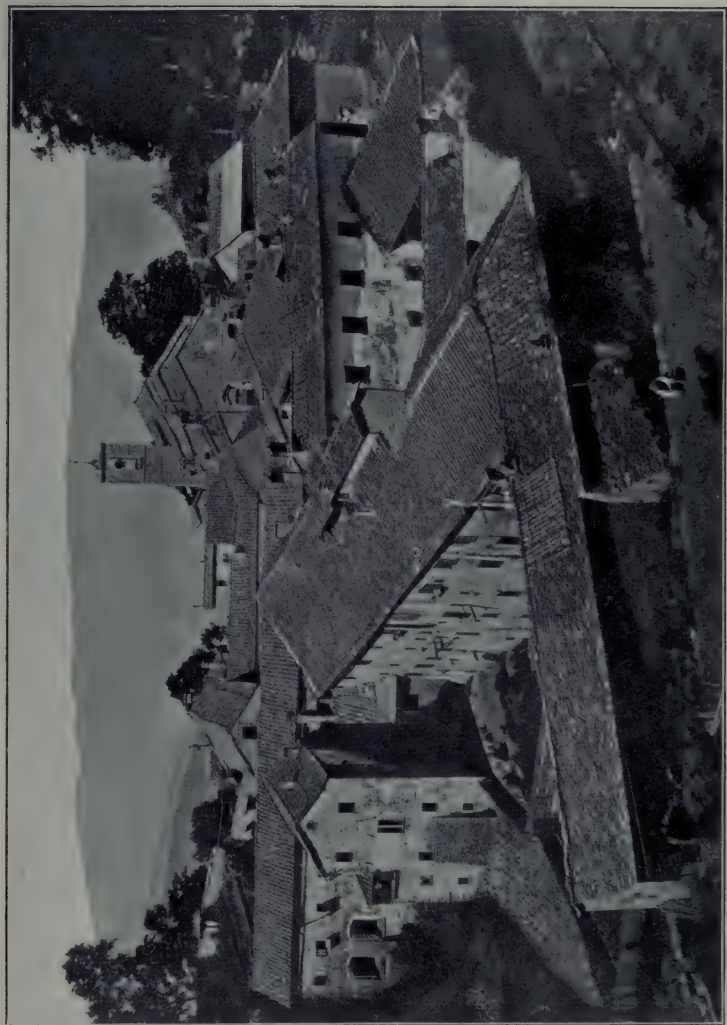
Mons coagulatus, Mons pinguis . . . Mons in quo beneplacitum est Deo habitare in eo: etenim Dominus habitabit in finem.—PSALM LXVII.

EARLY in the morning of the 14th September 1224, on the Feast of the Exaltation of Holy Cross, ere day had yet dawned, Francis Bernardone, at that time the foremost Standard-bearer of Christ in all Christendom, received the marks of his Lord's Passion while keeping the Lent of St. Michael Archangel on the solitary rugged heights of Mount La Verna in Tuscany. The wild mountain has ever since been one of the chief objects of interest in the Kingdom of God upon earth, but fewer of the faithful go there than might be supposed.

For the way to Mount La Verna, like the narrow way, is beset with difficulties. To get there you must make as if you were going to Camaldoli, the home of St. Romuald's children. (See

next Chapter.) Descend at Bibbiena station. Do not fear to arrive in the evening ; you may sleep there in cleanliness and comfort, and eat of the wholesomest and best, if you take shelter in the little hostelry called the Albergo Amorosi. From Bibbiena a carriage, after three hours' toilsome climb up the roughest of roads, will bring you within measurable distance of the Franciscan convent at the summit. The last twenty minutes of the climb must be done on foot, so steep, so rough, so narrow, has the path become.

Arrived at the Convent doors, you will receive that hearty, cheery welcome peculiar to all Religious, whether Friars, or Monks, or Clerks Regular. If you are of the male sex, a bed and possibly a separate bedroom will be prepared for you in the guest-quarter of the Convent ; if of the gentler sex, you must sleep below, where, at the point that your horses could go no further, stands a great barn-like building, kept for the purpose by two ancient dames of the Third Order of St. Francis. But both men and women may take their meals together in the guest-quarter up at the Convent. The food is homely, but seasoned with a piquant and appetising sauce—the cheery chat, the gentle humour, the exquisite courtesy of the humble Religious who wait upon you at table. They fall so naturally and tactfully into the menial office, they make you so thoroughly at home ; yet I



*Photograph by*

THE CONVENT OF LA VERNA

AGOSTINI, Florence

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protest that it would be much more fit and natural that we, selfish and self-indulgent creatures of the world, should be at their feet, begging as a privilege to wipe the dust off their sandals. No charge is made by the Fathers for their hospitality, but every guest makes an offering according to his means, or, better still, according to his affections, which after the briefest stay here will surely far outrun his means.

La Verna (4160 feet) is a wonderful mountain to behold. Bare and barren at first, and rising very gradually, it suddenly shoots up skywards in great perpendicular walls of rock. "The Ark of Noah petrified on Mount Ararat," is M. Sabatier's graphic description. To my imagination, as seen from the west, it seemed like some heraldic monster of the cockatrice order, and mentally I blazoned it against the heavens azure: combed vert and wattled tenné. The crest is covered with pines and huge beech-trees; all round the Convent, as if fallen from the skies, immense boulders of rock, piled one on the top of the other, show deep fissures, wide chasms, and dark caverns: a wilder spot it would be impossible to imagine. It was revealed to St. Francis that the rocks were thus upheaved at the hour of the Crucifixion, when the earth did quake and the rocks were rent; and even the flippant *fin-de-siècle* sceptic forgets to show astonishment or

express contempt at the statement, so marvellous, so unique, are Nature's freaks on Mount La Verna, so rarefied, so penetrating, is the atmosphere of the supernatural that hangs about it.

A shred or two of history before I speak further of personal impressions. It was in the year of our Lord 1213, Francis then being thirty-one years of age and his Order four years in existence, that Orlando Cattani, Count of Chiusi, a pious and wealthy noble, made the Saint a free gift of Mount La Verna. "My father," he said, "I possess a mountain in Tuscany that is very lonely and most suited to contemplation; if so be that you are pleased to dwell there, I will most willingly make you a free gift of it for the love of God, and I will see, too, that you are furnished with all things necessary for the life of the body."

Francis gratefully accepted the precious offering, and sent two of his Religious to take possession of the mountain. Fifty armed men accompanied them, so greatly was that countryside infested with robbers and wild beasts. The two Religious, with the help of the men-at-arms, cut down the boughs of trees, and, adding a plaster of mud, built with them a rude habitation, divided into a few separate cells. This was the original of the famous Convent of La Verna!

It was not until August in 1215 that Francis



*Photograph by*

**MOUNT LA VERNA**

*AGOSTINI, Florence*

*To face p. 224*





paid his first visit to the holy mount, setting out from Santa Maria degli Angeli at Assisi. We may not linger with him on that memorable journey, which has been described for all time in the "Fioretti." It was near his journey's end, at a spot now marked by a little chapel called the Cappella degli Uccelli, while sitting down to rest ere making the last brief steep ascent, that a crowd of birds of all kinds, whirling in the air with every demonstration of delight, finally settled, some on his shoulders, some on his arms, some in his lap, and some at his feet. The dear Saint lifted a happy face to the Brothers who were with him and said: "Dear Brothers, it cannot but be that the Lord Jesus is pleased that we should dwell in this lonely mountain, for see what joy our brothers and sisters, the birds, show at our coming."

St. Francis visited La Verna six times altogether. We can only follow him on his last visit thither. This was in 1224, two years before his death, when he repaired to La Verna to keep the Lent of St. Michael, which commenced on the 16th August and ended on the 28th September. Being now more than ever joined in familiar intercourse with his Master, Francis desired to observe this Lent with more than customary strictness. He caused a little cell to be built for himself in a solitary spot of the mountain, only accessible by a plank bridge.

And then he laid upon his brethren the command that they should leave him entirely alone. "Only thou, Frate Leone,"<sup>1</sup> he said, "thou, if I shall not have come at midday to share the usual meal with the rest, thou mayest come and bring me a little bread and water; and again thou mayest come at midnight, at the hour of Matins, but, before entering thou shalt say: O Lord, open Thou my lips; and if I answer, then pass over and we will say Matins together; but if I answer not, then depart without further speech."

But besides Frate Leone, another privileged friend, Frate Falcone, was admitted to some intimacy with Francis during this long fast. Brother Falcon had his home in the rock above the cell, and nightly, with unfailing fidelity, awoke the Saint with his cries about the hour of Matins, so that he might in nowise fail to rise and say the Divine Office. Only Divine Providence had infused into Brother Falcon the bowels of human compassion, for, when he saw that his brother Francis was more than usually wearied with fasting and watching, he let him sleep in peace until the dawn. Thus did the birds of the air (what no human being

<sup>1</sup> Fra Leone was his confessor and secretary. By reason of his gentleness and simplicity, the Saint used to call him Fra Pecorella di Dio. He was certainly the St. John of this company of Apostles—the favourite disciple, who was allowed to recline on his master's breast in the fulness of a tender intimacy.

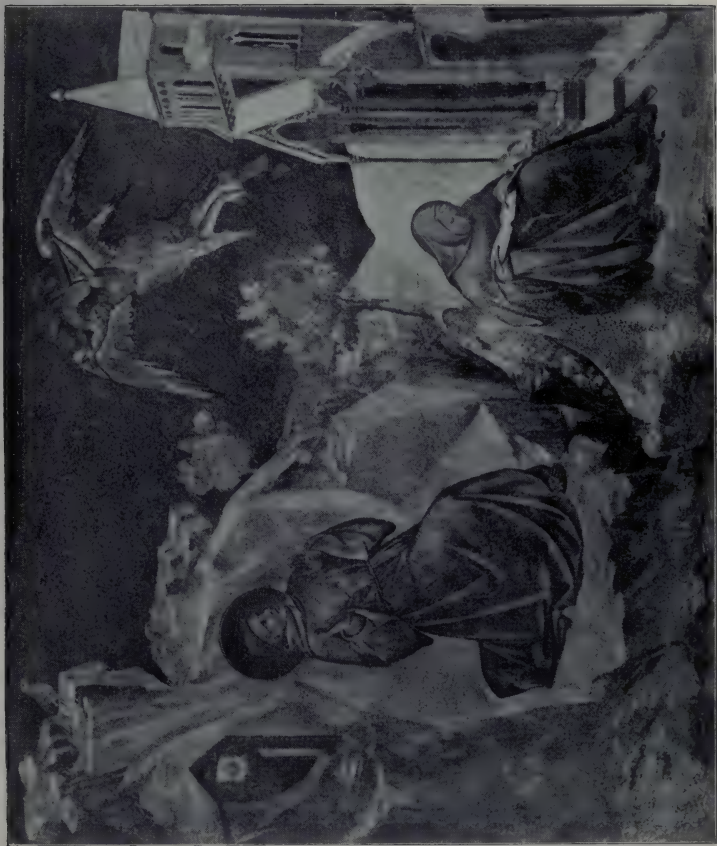
ever could) temper a little the austerity of the penance which Brother Francis had set himself. Brother Falcon still, to-day, builds in the same rock, and though rude and inconsiderate hands have robbed him of his young, though he departs at times to launch his offspring in the great world, yet ever does he return to build in the rock that is hallowed by the memory of his pious ancestor, the Blessed Falcon.

Early on the morning of the 14th September, on the Feast of the Exaltation of Holy Cross, ere day had yet dawned, certain shepherds in the plain below saw the holy hill irradiated with a light as of the risen sun. And certain muleteers, believing that the sun had indeed risen, started on their journey to the Romagna, only to be overtaken by darkness when that supernatural light had failed. For the light came from heaven, and it shone upon Francis rapt in the love of God. And as he looked, he beheld a Seraph with six wings descending swiftly towards him; two of the wings hid the Angel's face, two others covered his body, while with the other two he winged his rapid flight to earth. And as the Seraph drew nigh, the Saint looked and saw that he was nailed upon a Cross like the Lord Himself. In that heavenly visitation, Francis was sealed with the Five Wounds of the Passion.

The case of St. Francis of Assisi is the first

recorded case of Stigmata in hagiography, and it remains to this day the best authenticated and the most marvellous. The most marvellous, and in this unique, that through the wounds in the poor hands and feet there projected long nails of a black, hard, fleshy substance. The round heads of the nails showed close against the palms, and from out the back of the hands came the points of the nails, bent back, as if they had pierced through wood and then been clinched. And so with the feet: the nails had pierced them through, so that it was agony to the poor Saint to put his feet on the ground. The open wound in the side had the appearance of having been inflicted by a lance-head. There is no reason to doubt the substantial accuracy of this account of the nature of St. Francis' Stigmata. That he actually received the Stigmata is, of course, beyond all doubt, and no serious person any longer seeks to dispute the fact. M. Paul Sabatier, born a Huguenot and since lapsed into Renanism, while denying the possibility of all miracle, admits the essential fact to the full. "Il reste," he says, "à examiner les stigmates au point de vue purement historique. Or, si sur ce terrain les difficultés petites et grandes ne manquent pas, les témoignages m'ont paru à la fois *trop nombreux* et *trop précis* pour ne pas entraîner la conviction." ("Vie de St. François d'Assise," 22me édition, p. 402. Paris, 1899.)





*Photograph by*

ST. FRANCIS RECEIVING THE STIGMATA

*From a Fresco by GIOTTO in the Lower Church at Assisi*

ALINARI, Florence

*To face p. 228*



The day after the Feast of St. Michael, Francis left La Verna forever. He could no longer walk, on account of the great pain of his wounds, but rode upon an ass which Count Orlando had sent up for his use. Before starting, he besought the children around him, and the children that were to come after him, to have a special care of the holy mount where God had wrought such wonders. "I desire," he said, "that this place shall ever be inhabited by God-fearing Religious, the flower of my Order. I command you under holy obedience to live in charity, to be instant in prayer, to have a diligent care of this place, singing the Divine Praises day and night. And suffer no man to profane this holy hill. I give my blessing to all who shall respect and reverence it. Ah!—Ah!—Ah!—Fra Masseo, I can say no more."

Fra Masseo, in a letter addressed to his brethren, has left a vivid record of the Saint's pathetic farewell to Mount La Verna. It runs something like this, but that so much of the savour has gone out of it in the English tongue :

"Addio! Addio! Addio! Fra Masseo!  
Addio! Addio! Addio! Frate Angelo!"

(And the like he said also to Fra Silvestro and to Frate Illuminato.) "Rest in peace, my dearest children. May God bless you. My dearest children, farewell! I am leaving you in the

body, but I leave my heart behind with you. I am going away with Fra Pecorella di Dio; I am going to Santa Maria degli Angeli, and I shall return hither no more. I am going: farewell, farewell, farewell, to all! Farewell, O Mountain! Farewell, farewell, Mount La Verna! Farewell, Mount of Angels! Farewell, my best beloved; O best beloved, farewell! Brother Falcon, I thank thee for the charity thou didst use me. Addio, Sasso Spicco! Farewell, great rock! Farewell, farewell, farewell, O rock that didst receive me into thy bowels, confounding the wiles of the evil one. Alas! we may meet no more. Farewell, Santa Maria degli Angeli!<sup>1</sup> O Mother of the Eternal Word, I commend to thee these my dear sons!"

"And while our dear father was speaking thus," continues poor Masseo, "our eyes were shedding fountains of tears, and he departed, weeping likewise, taking with him our hearts, and leaving us orphans indeed, for the loss of such a father. I, Frate Masseo, have writ all this. And may God bless us!"

Before finally losing sight of La Verna, Francis turned and once more blessed the holy hill in these words: "Farewell, thou mountain of God, thou Holy Mount, *Mons coagulatus*, *Mons pinguis*,

<sup>1</sup> The little church on Mount La Verna, not to be confounded with the more famous Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli at Assisi.



*Mons in quo beneplacitum est Deo habitare.*<sup>1</sup>  
 Farewell, Mount la Verna! May God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost bless thee! Rest in peace, for we shall never meet again!"

Such then is the great fact, luminous and indisputable, which has made Mount la Verna famous in Christendom. Let us briefly glance at one interesting proof of it which has put the whole matter outside the range of doubt for sane and scientific historians,—*imprimis* for M. Sabatier. It fell out one day that Fra Leone was grievously afflicted with a spiritual temptation, and ardently desired, as the only remedy, to have some memorable passage of Holy Scripture written out by the hand of the Saint and briefly annotated by him. But he dared not ask it. St. Francis, however, divined his wish, and wrote on parchment with his own hand, signing it with his sign manual of a Cross Tau, the following memorable passage of Holy Writ, which is nothing less than the words in which Almighty God commanded that Aaron and his sons should bless the children of Israel :

*Benedicat tibi Dominus et custodiat te :  
 Ostendat faciem suam tibi et misereatur tui :  
 Convertat vultum suum ad te et det tibi pacem.*<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Saint, who has been speaking in Italian, here breaks into Latin of the Liturgy. "Ces paroles," says M. Sabatier, who defends the authenticity of Fra Masseo's letter, "ont du véritablement être prononcées par lui."

<sup>2</sup> Numbers vi. 24-26.

Then follows the Saint's annotation, and surely since Moses wrote there has never been so eloquent, so touching a commentary on the Scriptures: *Dominus benedicat te, Frater Leo*—and may the Lord bless thee, Brother Leo.

The original of this Blessing is preserved in the Sacristy of the Sagro Convento at Assisi. Precious as it is in itself, it has been made yet more precious by the statements which Fra Leone has written on the face of it in his own well-known handwriting. He has authenticated the Blessing itself, he has authenticated the Cross Tau, and above the Blessing he has written the following priceless witness to the truth of the Stigmata :

“The Blessed Francis, two years before his death, kept a Lent at La Verna in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mother of God, and of the Blessed Michael Archangel, from the Feast of the Assumption of the Holy Virgin Mary to the Feast of St. Michael in September, and the hand of the Lord touched him by the vision and converse of a Seraph, *and by the impression of the Wounds of Christ in his own body, &c.*”

The writer's fortunate discovery of the significance of the hieroglyphic out of which the Cross Tau rises, proves that St. Francis has himself, in pen and ink, witnessed to the fact that he did receive the Stigmata, and constitutes proof final







and irrefragable of this interesting historical event.<sup>1</sup>

And now let us glance, brief as the glance must be, at the wonders which, if you will take scrip and staff and ascend thither, you still may see with your own eyes on the Mountain of La Verna at the end of this unbelieving century :

1. Of the *Cappella degli Uccelli* and what took place there, I have already spoken.

2. By a low gateway we enter the large courtyard of the Convent called *il Quadrante*. And in spirit we take the shoes from off our feet, for we are on very holy ground. The Convent itself is a large, low, irregular pile of buildings, rough, bare, and exceedingly severe. The present edifices date from about 1472. Very impressive is the dark quadrilateral corridor ; cells, whose walls do not reach the roof, run round every side of it, and the great worm-eaten rafters above are dimly visible in the darkness. When midnight comes, one of the gentle Brothers, transformed, surely, for the nonce, into a fiend in friarly shape, walks round the extent of the great dormitory, wielding a cruel pair of clappers, whose inhuman din makes all the rafters ring as if the foul fiend were upon us. I was in the corridor at the time, and stopped

<sup>1</sup> I have fully explained the discovery in an Italian pamphlet, "La Benedizione di San Francesco: Spiegazione del Geroglifico," Livorno, Giusti, 1900, p. 16, and also in *St. Peter's Magazine* for February 1900, "A New Light on the Benediction of St. Francis."

my ears, but my eyes, by the light of a friend's lantern, saw the doors open and cheerful figures flit along to midnight Matins in the Church. A cheerfulness born of grace surely, for an old Friar confessed to me that all habits may be formed, but never in a long lifetime the habit of rising willingly at midnight. Usually, between Fathers and Novices and Lay Brothers, there are quite a hundred Friars at La Verna. Here, more than in any other place that I know of in old Tuscany, you may see what flourishing religious life was like, before a cruel and inconsiderate secular hand sought to stifle it. The Friars of La Verna have enjoyed a better fortune than many other Religious. When they were about to be dispossessed in the ill-advised wholesale suppression of 1866, the Municipality of Florence made good a claim to the property as against the Government. And though the Municipality, as present landlords, make the Friars pay rent for living in their own house, still, on the whole, they are left in peace to praise God, to the great contentment of the poor and of the tourist climber in search of refreshment.

3. Then there is the *Cappella della Maddalena*, which, it is thought, marks the spot of the original *Tugurio* or Convent of wattles and daub. Here the Master appeared to Francis, and seated on a rude stone which served the community as table, made four promises regarding his Order which

have become famous in Catholic Christendom. Frate Leone coming in later to lay the table for dinner, the Saint stopped him, saying: "Brother Leo, wash this stone, first with water, then with wine, then with oil, then with milk, and then with balsam, for I tell thee the Lord Jesus has sat upon it." This stone is now used as the altar-stone of the Chapel, and the clergy account it a great privilege to say Mass upon it, for Francis called it also "the Altar of God." It was on this spot, too, that St. Francis wrote the Blessing for Fra Leone.

4. The little Church of *Santa Maria degli Angeli*, or *Chiesina*, was the original Church of La Verna, begun in 1216 by St. Francis, after designs, says tradition, furnished by the Blessed Virgin herself. It was afterwards enlarged by St. Bonaventure. Even now it is but 29 feet long by 17 wide. 'Tis a spot very sacred to the Friars, but the increase in their numbers and the great concourse of the Faithful obliged them to build

5. The spacious *Church of St. Mary*, begun in 1348. It is 131 feet long and 33 wide, handsome in its proportions, and devout in the extreme. It is, moreover, rich in della Robbias, and contains, perhaps, the two most perfect specimens in all the world (the undoubted work of Luca himself)—an Annunciation in the Niccolini Chapel on the left, and a Nativity in the

Brizzi Chapel on the right. Three colours only are used in these exquisite works—white, blue, and green; not even in the borders is there any yellow.

6. Just outside the entrance to the Church is the covered loggia, which leads to the Chapel of the Stigmata. For you must know that twice a day, the first time after Vespers, and the second after midnight Matins, the Friars go in procession from the Church to this Chapel, which now covers the spot where the great miracle took place. The loggia is 250 feet in length; on one side of it is a *Via Crucis* in bas-relief, on the other frescoes representing scenes from the life of the Saint. It was built in 1582. Before this, the Friars had made their procession in the open, even in the terrible storms and bitter cold of winter time. There is a tradition—one of those characteristic traditions of the Catholic Church which, if lacking in scientific precision, have yet never harmed a living soul<sup>1</sup>—a tradition that, on the night of a fearful snowstorm, the Community turned faint-

<sup>1</sup> "Toute religion," says Joseph de Maistre, "par la nature même des choses, pousse une mythologie qui lui ressemble. Celle de la religion chrétienne est, par cette raison, toujours chaste, toujours utile, et souvent sublime, sans que (par un privilège particulier) il soit jamais possible de la confondre avec la religion même. De manière que nulle mythe chrétien ne peut nuire, et que souvent il mérite toute l'attention de l'observateur." *Principe Générateur des Constitutions Politiques*, XXX. (note). And I will be so bold as to maintain that all the "myths" mentioned in the course of my book are well worthy the best attention of the observer.





*Photograph by*

*ALINARI, Florence*

THE ANNUNCIATION, BY LUCA DELLA ROBBIÀ

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hearted and remained indoors. Next day the path to the Chapel was deeply marked in the snow with the footprints of all manner of birds and beasts who had gone in procession to do duty for the Friars. After this reproof from dumb animals, the Community was never known to fail again, however bitter the cold, however deep the snow.

7. The loggia leads, as I have said, to the *Chapel of the Stigmata*. Behind the High Altar of it is a della Robbia Crucifixion with life-size figures. It is the favourite with many people in this museum of della Robbia. On the top of the Cross, in a green nest—how touching the idea, how fitting the place—is a pelican in her piety. The spot where St. Francis knelt when the Seraph flew down to him is in front of the High Altar, and covered with an iron grating.

I can do little more than just mention by name :

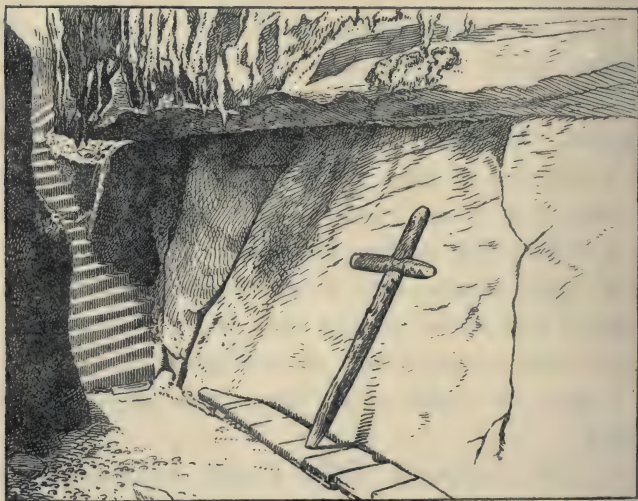
8. The *Cappella della Croce*, adjoining the Chapel of the Stigmata, and marking the spot where stood the cell in which St. Francis kept the Lent of St. Michael in 1224.

9. The *Oratory of St. Anthony of Padua*, where the great preacher compiled his "Sermonario."

10. The *Oratory of St. Bonaventure*, where the Seraphic Doctor wrote his "Itinerarium Mentis in Deum."

Do not fail to see—

11. The *Sasso Spicco*, most characteristic of all the great rocks of La Verna. It hangs to the mountain-side seemingly by a mere thread of itself, and yet is a great solid mass, 43 feet wide and 13 feet deep. As you walk underneath the huge monster, it seems as if it must surely slide



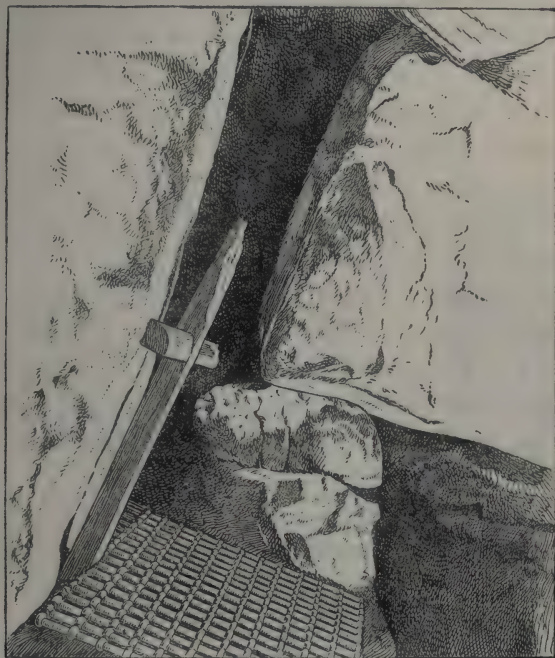
THE SASSO SPICCO, LA VERNA

down and grind you to powder. Under its shelter St. Francis used often to pass hours in prayer and meditation.

12. The Bed, or *Letto*, of St. Francis, a dark cavernous nook, situated in the very bowels of the rocks, where the Saint delighted to rest and pray.



13. Then there is the spot in the sheer precipice, now accessible by a practicable way, where the solid rock turned to soft wax, receiving into it the Saint's body when Satan attempted to throw him over the cliff. It is to this rock that St.



IL LETTO DI SAN FRANCESCO, LA VERNA

Francis so tenderly addresses his thanks in the "Addio" to La Verna which has already been quoted.

14. Leaving the Convent to walk up to La Penna, the highest point of the mountain, you will

pass the *cell of the Blessed Giovanni della Verna*, a very holy Religious who died in 1322. The Lord used to come and walk familiarly with him there, as he walked with Enoch of old, and on that spot touched by the Divine feet the grass has ever since refused to grow. In fact, in front of Giovanni's cell there is a bare space some 50 feet long by 20 wide, now walled-in, and the grass is rich and green all round the outside of the walls, but there is not so much as a tuft within.

15. Proceeding, you will come to the *Sasso di Lupo* (Rock of the Wolf), a rock split away from the mass, and rising up like a great granite tower. It was the refuge of Lupo, the cruel robber chieftain, until Francis converted him and made a Friar of him. In Religion, so gentle had he become, that he was known as *Frate Agnello* (Brother Lamb).

16. And finally you reach *La Penna*, marked (like so many other points) with a Chapel, and protected, for the safety of the giddy, with a stout iron railing. For we are on the very brink of the sheerest precipice of rock, 700 feet in height. From *La Penna* you may gaze over the whole extent of the smiling fertile Casentino, and likewise behold all the splendours of the Valleys of the Arno and the Tiber, the Perugian Hills, the Umbrian Plains, and the wild country of the Legations and the Marches.



*Photograph by*

*AGOSTINI, Florence*

THE ROCK OF THE STIGMATA, LA VERNA

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The Feast of the Stigmata is kept on the 17th September, the day on which the event took place being already dedicated to the greater festival of Holy Cross. It is observed by the whole Church as a "double," with proper, introit, collect, gradual, and offertory in the Mass, and by the Franciscan Order as a "double of the second class" with proper hymns and antiphons for Vespers, Matins and Lauds. Our first visit to La Verna was paid on this, to that Community, greatest of all Feasts. We arrived on the afternoon of the 16th, and it was well that the good Fathers knew of our coming and had reserved comfortable quarters for us, or we should have fared but roughly. For it so fell out that the 17th was a Sunday, and the toilers of the countryside were free to come in numbers. Hundreds of peasants had already poured in. Every square inch of sleeping room had long since been allotted. We rose at midnight for Matins. The weather had changed. A mountain storm was raging in full fury. The rain poured in torrents, the wind howled, distant thunder rumbled angrily. What a spectacle the Church presented! On the benches, in the Confessionals, underneath the Altars, on the Altar steps, lay the recumbent figures of a hundred or two peasants who had found no other place to rest their heads. Great green Gingham were stretched out to dry; dogs slept by their masters' side; nearly every man had his bundle of provisions. Verily these Tuscan

peasants are at home in their Father's house. As the Matins' bell rang out, the dripping creatures rose and shook themselves, and soon the rattle of Rosaries showed that they too were joining in the Divine Praises. Matins and Lauds were chanted to the Tones (not monotoned) in honour of the great Feast. And then followed that wonderful procession along the *loggia* to the Chapel of the Stigmata. Crucifer with his Crucifix, on either side of him two acolytes with octagonal lanterns raised aloft on staves, led the way of the long procession of St. Francis' sons chanting the *Miserere*, and we followed with the medley group of motley peasants. In the Chapel itself there was room only for the Friars, who knelt in a double row with outstretched arms; the rest of us remained crowded at the open door. And, presently, on the very spot where the Poor Man of Assisi was transformed into the likeness of his Crucified Master, the rich clear voice of the Versicularian intoned the versicle:

*Signasti Domine servum tuum Franciscum:—*

*Signis Redemptionis nostræ!* came the answering shout from hundreds of throats, some of them choked by the tears which it was so difficult to keep back.

It was half-past two in the morning ere the long religious function was over. Many of the Fathers did not go back to bed, but betook themselves straight to their Confessionals. The long series of

Masses began about three o'clock. That day some two thousand confessions were heard ; some two thousand souls received Holy Communion. Communion was still being given after midday to people who had been waiting hours for a chance of going to Confession,—and they were fasting be it remembered. Many had to go away with their devotion unsatisfied. The Fathers fed, entirely, about a thousand people, and, partially, quite double that number. And all this—all this—because the son of an Umbrian cloth merchant, now nearly seven hundred years ago, chose the better part, and loved God above all things, and his neighbour better than himself!

The hour of our departure had come, and our kind friend the guest Father brought us the visitors' book and asked us to write in it. A difficult task at all times, and we would fain have been excused. But it was impossible to refuse the polite request, and taking the book we wrote in halting Tuscan :

" N—— N—— were the guests of the Franciscan Fathers here from the —— to the ——, and departed from this dwelling-place of the Poor Ones of Christ richer men than when they came."

Our mules were at the Convent gate. One last brief hasty visit to the Chapel of the Stigmata. The Novices are there with the Novice Master, engaged in a service of prayer. We can hear the

words of their prayers, and how can we help joining in them :

ANT. Facta est super me manus Domini, et adduxit me super montem excelsum.

℣. Signasti Domine servum tuum Franciscum :

℞. Signis Redemptionis nostræ.

#### OREMUS

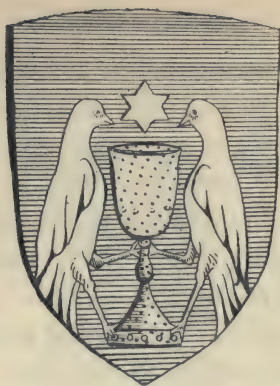
Domine Jesu Christe, qui frigiscente mundo, ad inflammandum corda nostra tui amoris igne, in carne beatissimi Francisci Passionis tuæ sacra Stigmata renovasti : concede propitius ; ut ejus meritis et precibus crucem jugiter feramus et dignos fructus poenitentiae faciamus. Qui vivis et regnas per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen.



# A TUSCAN SUMMER RESORT

CAMALDOLI





CAMALDOLI

## A TUSCAN SUMMER RESORT: CAMALDOLI

CAMALDOLI, most charming of summer resorts, is situated in that part of Tuscany known as the Casentino. It is actually within the modern province, and in the ancient and modern diocese, of Arezzo, thirty miles from the city of Arezzo itself, and about forty-two miles south-east of Florence.

Camaldoli, like many another delightful place in old Tuscany, is not easy of access. If you are at Florence—and at least you can get there very easily—you will take the train thence to Arezzo, and the journey of fifty-four miles will last two, three, or four hours, according as your train may be “very direct,” “direct,” or “omnibus.” At Arezzo you will get on to the quaintest diminutive branch-line, ending right in the heart of the

Casentino at the busy little manufacturing town of Stia. The line runs for the most part through high acacia hedges, alongside the Arno, here little better than a turbulent rivulet. Descend at Bibbiena station or at Poppi, just beyond it. Both are about equi-distant from Camaldoli. The majolicas of Andrea della Robbia in the Church of San Lorenzo at Bibbiena are of surpassing beauty, but the castle and donjon of the once powerful Counts Guidi at Poppi is more imposing. Choose the station of descent according to your taste : you will have time to see either the majolicas or the castle before undertaking the two hours' drive which will bring you up to Camaldoli, most charming of summer resorts.

Camaldoli is situated, as the geography books would put it, at an altitude of 2718 feet above the sea-level, on that range of the Tuscan Apennines which practically divides Tuscany from the Romagna. Camaldoli is not a village, not even a hamlet. It simply consists of one huge block of buildings, of plainest, severest architecture, comprising an hotel, a church, and a monastery, all adjoining and communicating. The hotel is kept by Signor Fortunato Chiari, famous among Tuscan hotel-keepers, for he is part proprietor of the Savoy and the Grande Bretagne at Florence, and sole proprietor of the Victoria on the Lung' Arno. The monastery is inhabited by the White Monks of St. Romuald, known throughout the





*Photograph by*

*ALINARI, Florence*

THE CASTLE OF POPPI

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world as the Camaldolese Order. The Church, dividing hotel and monastery, is common ground to monks and visitors. High up above the hotel and monastery, a good hour's walk through dense pine forests, is situated, fronting a splendid amphitheatre of pine trees, the Sacro Eremo, or Holy Hermitage (3680 feet), where live in separate cells the Camaldolese Hermits as distinguished from the Camaldolese Monks.

Very soon you come to see that the monks and hermits add an indefinable charm to the whole place, and begin to try and find out what the Camaldolese Order is. Romuald, of the noble family of the Onesti, Dukes of Ravenna, having renounced the world and joined the Benedictine Order about the year 980, came in course of time to aspire to a still higher form of the religious state. He wished to revive the hermit life in the Church, and with five followers settled about A.D. 1012 in a wild deserted spot on the Apennines, called the Campo Amabile, the gift of the Aretine Count Maldolo. The fame of the sanctity of Romuald and his hermits drew crowds of people to see and consult them. These had to be housed and fed in accordance with monastic dictates of hospitality and charity, but to the sore hindrance of the holy hermits in their devotions and avocations. Then Romuald hit upon the device of starting a hospice below at Campus Maldoli, another gift of the good Count. To

the hospice was attached a monastery with monks of a less rigid observance, and to them was assigned the duty of entertaining all visitors, so that the hermits might be left in greater freedom from constant interruption. The modern hotel is simply the ancient hospice. It will thus be seen that there are two distinct religious states in the Camaldolese Order—the Eremitic and the Monastic—as is typified in the arms of the Order: on a field celestial, two silver doves drinking out of the same golden chalice.

The Hermitage, as at present constituted, consists of some twenty separate cells or little cottages, divided by paved footpaths after the manner of a village, a beautiful church which is practically one choir, a building in which the lay-brothers live (for they do not live the life of hermits), and an Observatory, the whole enclosed by a high stone wall. Each cell contains a little chapel or oratory with altar, a living room with bed let into the wall, a passage entrance, and a room for the storage of firewood. Attached to each cell is a goodly piece of flower and kitchen garden, cultivated by the hermit himself in the brief leisure which his avocations allow him.

The “rule” of the hermits, if somewhat mitigated since the days of St. Romuald, is still abundantly severe. They eat no meat, observe two Lents every year, and on all Fridays dine off bread and water. Each hermit takes his meals





*Photograph by*

GROUP OF CAMALDOLESE MONKS

Rev. C. K. DALTON

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by himself: his food is passed into his cell by a revolving dumb-waiter, so that he does not even see the lay-brother who brings it. No meat is allowed in the hermitage under any consideration. A father who falls sick is removed down to the monastery infirmary, and even there it is only by a dispensation obtained some thirty years ago that meat may be eaten. Seven times in the twenty-four hours the hermits leave their cells, however inclement the weather, whatever the season of the year, and betake themselves to the hermitage church to sing the Divine Office.<sup>1</sup> They rise at half-past one in the night-time for Matins, Lauds, and Meditation, lasting an hour and a half. The strictest silence is observed, and speaking or a brotherly reunion only allowed on stated occasions. Twelve times alone in the year—on the principal festivals, that is—do the hermits eat together, and even then speaking is not allowed until the meal is over.

The monks at the monastery below live much the same life, but it is less trying in being cenobitic, and daily walks abroad are permitted. Of course their *raison d'être* has to some extent disappeared. They are no longer foresters, because their woods have been taken from them; they are no longer hosts, because their hospice has been turned into a modern hotel. Up to the year 1866, any man, whether rich or poor, could

<sup>1</sup> "Septies in die laudem dixi Tibi" (Ps. cxviii.).

have three days' hotel accommodation at Camaldoli free of cost—so different are mediæval ideas to modern. Most of the modern monks have been hermits at one time or another, and it is astonishing how readily they return to the severer form of life when their superiors allow it. The monks are by no means unapproachable. They mix freely enough with the hotel guests, and are ever on the look-out to render you some kindly service. And I observed that both they, and the two or three hermits with whom I had speech, are full of that sunny cheerfulness which I have ever noted as a characteristic of monastic orders. Curiously enough—or perhaps not curiously—the severer the Order and its rule, the more cheerful do its members seem. I well remember, years ago, my head then full of very different notions, how the famous hagiographer, Alban Butler, startled me when I first came across a passage in which he says: "Gaiety of soul (which always attends virtue) is particularly necessary in all who are called to a life of perfect solitude, in which nothing is more pernicious than sadness."<sup>1</sup> The "gaiety of soul" of the Camaldolese, if unobtrusive, is most captivating.

The Camaldolese are dressed in white. Romuald had at first given his children the traditional black habit of the Benedictines, but one day, sleeping

<sup>1</sup> Life of St. Bruno.



by the fount near his cell, he was favoured with a vision of a great ladder leading from earth to heaven, on which he saw a host innumerable of his brethren mounting to Paradise, but all clothed in white. He awoke to change the colour of their habit from black to white—so, at least, runs the legend. The habit of both monks and hermits is exactly similar: a white tunic and scapular, a long white cloak worn on certain occasions abroad and in choir, and the ample wide-sleeved cowl of the Benedictines, worn only in choir. Their heads are shaven, save for a very narrow corona, and their beards are allowed to grow. In summer the monks wear a huge broad-brimmed straw hat when taking their walks abroad. The dress of the lay-brothers has a few scarcely perceptible differences, but you will easily recognise a lay-brother by his leathern belt, whereas a father or novice wears a girdle of white webbing. In winter and rough weather, when the blinding snow is falling, the hermits wrap themselves up in yet another cloak when summoned to church, so that they may reach the choir as dry as possible. You will notice a room in the church entrance with rows of pegs where these cloaks are hung up to dry during the chanting of the Divine Office.

The hermitage and the monastery are each ruled by a Father Superior (he is not called a Prior as with other Benedictines) under the governance of the "Padre Maggiore," the head of

the whole Order. On our first visit to the hermitage we had the good fortune to be overtaken in the forest by the Padre Maggiore, Dom Costanzo Giovanelli, who greeted us with all the cheerful courtesy and gentle "gaiety of soul" of the real solitary, and, learning our errand, took us under his guidance. A living Saint he seemed to me, but my old oxen-driver called him "un Angelo del Paradiso,"—a juster description perhaps. The Superior of the monastery was Dom Pietro Orseolo Stoppa, cheeriest of companions and kindest of friends, and at the head of the hermitage was Dom Ambrogio Pieratelli, a majestic and very devout solitary, now gone to Brazil to start a hermitage in the wild pampas of Rio Grande do Sul.

The whole property of the Camaldolese Order—the hermitage, the monastery, the hospice, the library, the church itself, and the vast pine forests which for centuries they had so sedulously cultivated—was appropriated by the Government in 1866. The Order pay rent to the Government for such portions of their own property as they now occupy (the hermitage and the monastery), and the forestry work is in the hands of Government officials. Their splendid library has been removed to Poppi. Even in the stormy times of 1866, an Italian deputy was found with the courage to raise his voice in the Chamber against this wholesale confiscation, and prayed that an excep-

tion to the general law of suppression might be made in favour of the Camaldolese Order,<sup>1</sup> so beloved of Dante, the greatest son of Italy. The suggestion was greeted with "laughter," and Camaldoli shared the same fate as many other noble religious monuments.

But monks and hermits are not the only attraction of Camaldoli. There is our own very secular daily and delightful existence, the mountain excursions, the riding, shooting, and fishing in trout streams. Camaldoli abounds in an astonishing diversity of walks and climbs, and not only in walks and climbs, but in strolls and rambles. You can take a bath-chair up to the hermitage by the new road, or you can go to the summit of La Falterona, a stiff excursion which takes two days. Horses, ponies, and donkeys can be got from the neighbouring village of Serravalle. By an excellent system the charge for them is put in the hotel bill, so that you cannot possibly be overcharged by their genial owners, though the easy art of fleecing the foreigner is but little known as yet in the Casentino. The animals seem to have picked up the gentle manners of the monks: they do not kick, so that one pony is quite enough for

<sup>1</sup> The Benedictine Abbey of Monte Cassino, founded by Benedict himself in 529, was, I believe, the only religious house exempted from the law of suppression,—largely, it is said, owing to private strenuous representations of Mr. Gladstone.

two people: the pedestrian for the time being has but to hang on to the animal's tail, and he will be comfortably pulled up the steepest declivity. The people of the Casentino are simple and unspoiled. Here they still speak of a man not as a "man," but as a "Christian": to them the world is divided into Christians (*i.e.* Catholics), Jews, whom they do not count, and pagans, whom they have never seen. Hence all the real world to them is composed of Christians. "They have more Christians than ever in the hotel this year," I heard an old hewer of wood explaining to a Protestant lady. Passing through a field I called the attention of our donkey-driver, rather anxiously, to an indubitable bull: "Have no fear," he made answer, "I know the animal, and he is quite accustomed to the presence of Christians. Eh! when they are not in the habit of seeing Christians, they will even run a Christian down. Eh! sfido!" Still better was his remark about the donkey, Giorgio, who one day drank up a bucket of wine, "and," says he, "the young rascal got as drunk as a Christian!"

A delightful excursion, and which may be done in a day, is that to the summit of the Poggio Scali. And mountaineering, if you wish it, is made very easy at Camaldoli. The halt, the maimed, the blind, need shrink from no ordinary excursion if they go in a *treggia*. A *treggia* is a species of rough sleigh, on which is placed a





*Photograph by*

DOMINIC CARMICHAEL

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE HERMITAGE, CAMALDOLI



*Photograph by*

Mrs. CARMICHAEL

A TREGGIA

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basket frame capable of seating two people, and comfortably arranged with slanting back and cushions. It is drawn by a pair of the magnificent white oxen of Tuscany. No matter how steep or how stony, how crooked or how narrow the path, these patient, sure-footed brutes go steadily and smoothly onwards and upwards until the very pinnacle of your destination is reached. And really the *treggia* glides along with wonderful smoothness, and the motion is far from unpleasant. Coming down is, of course, another matter from the point of view of comfort, but a descent of some 2000 feet in a *treggia* would assuredly cure the worst liver complaint from which evil liver ever suffered.

The road to the Poggio Scali leads us first up the path to the hermitage, through the dense and dark pine-forests which afford cool shelter even from the fierce August sun of Italy. Here we dawdle, never weary of watching the teams of oxen dragging up the pine-trees which have been felled in the valleys below. It is a difficult and arduous operation. It takes a team of eight of these great beasts to drag up one tree, for the ascent is almost sheer. And it needs much art on the part of the drivers, and the wildest cries, with which the whole valley resounds, to keep the eight oxen moving at once. The trees are taken down to Camaldoli by the new road from the Eremo, and sawn in a mill near the monastery.

The Camaldolese Order in 1458 set up the first hydraulic saw-mill in Tuscany. This is one of the long list of their benefits to civilisation,<sup>1</sup> and standing in the shelter of the forests no longer their own, we remember gratefully that, if they felled trees and sold them, the rule of the Order obliged them to plant five thousand new pines every year, and that they usually planted double the number of their obligation.

Arrived at the hermitage—it is true that we were up very early and have already had a cold douche in the hotel bath—we confess to a feeling not unakin to hunger, to a sensation that may be frankly described as thirst. But it is not our first visit to the *Sacro Eremo*, and we know that in the lay-brothers' quarter there we can, at trifling cost, purchase refreshment that will send us strengthened on our way. Soon on a wooden table in the courtyard there is spread before us fresh brown bread, butter (such butter!), anchovies, and preserved tunny, to be followed hard after by a flagon of deep-coloured, sweet, yellow wine, tasting like the juice squeezed straight from the grape, and which must surely

<sup>1</sup> One of their many benefits to scholars are the "*Annales Camaldulenses*" (907 to 1764), "*quibus plura interseruntur tum ceteras Italico-monasticas res, tum historiam Ecclesiasticam remque Diplomaticam illustrantia.*" This is but a modest description of their varied contents. Publication commenced at Venice in 1755. Authors, Dom Giovanni Benedetto Mittarelli and Dom Anselmo Costadoni, monks of the Order.



have been the kind of liquor brewed by the Patriarch Noah, so sound is it and so strong. How many a time, on the return from a stiff climb in keenest Apennine air, have I blessed the holy hermitage and its simple, wholesome, ever-welcome fare.

On leaving the Eremo, by a path trying at times even to the oxen and *treggia*, we climb to the Prato Bertone, and along the ridge of the Giogana, to the Prato al Soglio, to Giogo Seccheta, and, finally, after a journey that need only have lasted three hours but for constant dawdling, botanising, and refreshing at the hermitage, to Poggio Scali, our destination (4952 feet). Here the splendour of the view takes away the remnants of the breath left in us. To the east, over the bare arid range of the Romagna Mountains, with scarce a trace of vegetation visible, and not a solitary habitation, we see the bright glitter of the Adriatic; to the west, though but faintly to-day, a silver sheen that must reflect from the Tyrrhenian Sea; right opposite to us, with its curious fringe of ragged, storm-tossed beech, the Mountain of La Penna, where the eagle nests and the Tuscan chamois<sup>1</sup> climbs to sniff the night air; to the south-east, in the far dim distance the three peaks which mark the old-world Republic of San Marino; to the south, distant only some 20 miles, the noble crest of Mount La Verna, where the

<sup>1</sup> Mufione.

dearest Saint that ever lived, now close upon seven hundred years ago, received the marks of the sacred Stigmata ; in the far south-east Monte Amiata, whence comes all the wealth of Tuscan quicksilver, and the red earths and ochres called after Sienna ; and again, in the west, the range of the Secchieta, whither, by the Consuma Pass, you may return to Florence and the outer Tuscan world beyond.

Every mountain, every valley, has its name and history, and Poldo, the old *treggia* driver, can tell us something about most of them. It seems as if one could gaze forever on so splendid, so varied an array of Nature's beauties. But after half-an-hour in the keen air of this mountain summit, our minds wander naturally to things more mundane, and forth from the depths of the *treggia* we produce an ample basket, placed there by Signor Gagliardi, most thoughtful of hotel managers. It contains a number of packets done up in spotless white paper, each bearing a most inviting legend. There are thin slices of the small juicy ham of the Casentino, slices of Tuscan tongue, of cold veal, and the *rosbiffi* of old Italy ; a cold pullet all ready divided for use with Nature's knives and forks ; a hunch of goat's-milk cheese ; a bag of purple plums and a bag of purple peaches ; and—*dulcis in fundo*—two lordly bottles of the purple wine of Mount Chianti. Old Poldo has already, before our last steep ascent, filled a

two-litre flask with the ice-cold limpid water of the Fonte Porcareccia. For condiment we have the best of all sauces—an appetite born of Apennine air, and behind the shelter of a stunted beech-clump, we make a meal that neither Paris nor London could have furnished forth.

This is a fair type of a daily excursion from Camaldoli, but the great expedition is to La Falterona (5410 feet), the highest point in this range of the Apennines. It is a six hours' climb, and cannot comfortably be undertaken in one day; besides, you will want to see the sun set and the sun rise. It is possible to sleep on the summit. In 1882 the Italian Alpine Club opened a comfortable shelter there, which is denominated the "Ricovero Dante" in memory of the place which the Falterona finds in the Divine Comedy. It consists of three rooms, a kitchen, and an attic; one room is always open, the others are accessible by keys to be obtained at the Alpine Station of Stia. About one thousand feet below the summit is an historical spot celebrated by Dante, a bubbling rill of clear water, which is nothing less than the source of the Arno.<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to say which is the finer of the sights we have come out to see—the rising of the sun over the Adriatic, or its slow fall to rest behind the Tyrrhenian Sea.

<sup>1</sup> Un fumicel che nasce in Falterona  
E cento miglia di corso nol sazia.

—*Purgatorio*, Canto xiv.

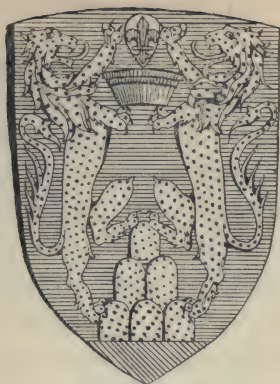
The comfortable hotel, with that simple good taste which characterises every detail of its management, is not called an hotel as though one were in Paris or London, but is designated by the good old-fashioned Italian word *Albergo*: the *Grande Albergo di Camaldoli* is its full style and title. It consists of two main quadrangles, with passages, cloister-like, running round, and rooms opening out of them. The effect is monastic, and pleasing as being so thoroughly in harmony with the surroundings. Portraits of Camaldolese Cardinals decorate the walls of the lofty reading-room, and old prints of a more or less ecclesiastical character greet one at every turn. There is no tinsel, or gilt, or plush, or great staring mirrors, such as the Philistine so dearly loves. But there is solidity, comfort, spotless cleanliness, and a table wholesome and liberal, justly based on the appetite Camaldoli is famed for producing. Within the hotel precincts is a post and telegraph office; letters leave once a day and come twice. Attached to the monastery is an ancient pharmacy, once the property of the monks, and where their old-time cordials and balsams can still be purchased from the modern lessee, our postmaster. And down in the basement, well out of our way, is a rustic hostelry frequented by the *contadini* of the mountain sides, and the travelling pedlars, who come great distances to offer us their quaint wares. This,



though in the same building, has no connection with the Grande Albergo. It is kept by a famous character and charming conversationalist called Francesco Salvi, but who is much better known by his sobriquet Pisello, given him because he cooks peas so well. Nicknames run in a family in Tuscany, and so his wife is called Pisella or Mistress Pea, his son Pisellino or young Pea, and his daughter Pisellina or Sweet Pea.

The society of the Grande Albergo is very select. It is much affected by diplomatists accredited to the Quirinal or the Vatican, who often for reasons of distance cannot get home on leave, but who as foreigners cannot possibly weather the summer heats of the Eternal City. And Camaldoli is a great favourite with the aristocracy of Florence and Rome. The diversions of the place are of the simplest—we walk, ride, shoot, fish, get up an occasional picnic, and come home thoroughly tired and ready for early bed. No one dreams of starting dances or concerts or charades. No strolling players or musicians ever trouble us, and not even the inevitable conjuror ventures near Camaldoli—he would fear to find us in bed. Thus the summer slips away in simple, healthy, tranquil happiness, and in early September we descend to the plains fortified in body and spirit, and blessing the kind fate that has guided our footsteps to Camaldoli, most charming of summer resorts.

Let not the elect accuse me of breach of trust in thus seeking to make Camaldoli more widely known in the wide world. They need fear no descent of the Philistines. Or if the Philistine should come he could not stand the life of the place for more than two days. The Spartan simplicity and cleanliness of the hotel, the order and decency, the wholesome fare, the pure unadulterated wine, above all the near neighbourhood of holy monks and hermits, reminding him of a past which he scorns and a future for which he has no liking, would soon cause him to take precipitate flight. He will return and tell his kind that Camaldoli is a "hole," that the hotel is a "barn," that there isn't a "blessed thing" to do or to see, not even a "caffee-chontong" in the evening, that the hermits look like "cut-throats" and the monks like "escaped lunatics." He will go back to his Jungfrau and his Dolomites, to hotels that will fleece him, and to adventurers that will flatter him, and Camaldoli will be reserved forever to the few who ask nothing better than the unalloyed delights of simple summer-holiday happiness.



MONTECATINI

## THE TUSCAN TUNBRIDGE: MONTECATINI

TUSCANY is commonly called the Garden of Italy, and the Valley of the Nievole the Garden of Tuscany. Montecatini is situated in one of the loveliest corners of this valley: hence it follows, by the rules of the syllogism, that Montecatini is a very beautiful spot. It was the glories of the Val di Nievole ("one tufted softness of fresh springing leaves") that drew from Mr. Ruskin one of his finest word pictures. Here it is, so that the reader may accurately know what his eyes will daily behold if ever he come to dwell in this Valley of the Olive and the Vine.

"The Val di Nievole is some five miles wide by thirty long, and is simply one field of corn or

rich grass land. . . . Undivided by hedges, the fields are yet meshed across and across by an intricate network of posts and chains. The posts are maple-trees, and the chains, garlands of vine. The meshes of this net each enclose two or three acres of the corn-land, with a row of mulberry-trees up the middle for silk. There are poppies, and bright ones too, about the banks and road-sides ; but the corn of the Val di Nievole is too proud to grow with poppies, and is set with wild gladiolus instead, deep violet. Here and there a mound of crag rises out of the fields, crested with stone-pine, and studded all over with the large stars of the white rock-cistus. Quiet streams, filled with close crowds of the golden waterflag, wind beside meadows painted with the purple orchis. On each side of the great plain is a wilderness of hills, veiled at their feet with a grey cloud of olive woods ; above, sweet with glades of chestnut ; peaks of more distant blue, still to-day,<sup>1</sup> embroidered with snow, are rather to be thought of as vast precious stones than mountains,<sup>2</sup> for all the state of the world's palaces has been hewn out of their marble."<sup>3</sup>

Montecatini is situated in the modern Province of Lucca. It is reached from Florence—on the Pistoia-Lucca-Pisa line—in about an hour and

<sup>1</sup> 29th April 1872.

<sup>2</sup> The mountains of Carrara.

<sup>3</sup> "Fors Clavigera," vol. ii. Letter XVIII.





*Photograph by*

MONTECATINI ALTO

MONTABONE, Florence

*To face p. 266*



twenty minutes, and from Leghorn in about two hours and a half. The place is divided into two very distinct and different parts : the Baths of Montecatini, situated by the Station, and Montecatini Alto, a very ancient township and famous fortress of the Florentine Republic, which is about two miles distant, perched high in front of us on the sheerest of hills. It is to the Baths that fashionable Italy flocks during the season of May to September. The afflicted of gout, dyspepsia, rheumatism, and liver, come there to be cured ; but they are an insignificant minority, for it must be owned that the vast majority of the gay crowd who so steadfastly go through the cure seem to have nothing whatsoever the matter with them. To tell the truth, Montecatini is an extremely pleasant place in which to enjoy oneself ; the cure is really only an agreeable pastime, and so, the wish being father to the thought, a widespread belief has grown up that the cure once a year is a very desirable measure as a preventive against all possible ills of the body. 'Tis the unusual case of cure being better than prevention. I am free to admit as an undoubted matter of fact, that the cure does seem beneficial even to the perfect in health. The average sound man leaves Montecatini with a clearer eye, a fresher face, a rosier tongue, and an appetite that is resented when he gets home. He also leaves with the resolve that he will certainly return next year, and so it comes to pass

that he goes on returning all the years of his life. Indeed there are hale, hearty old gentlemen there, habitués of thirty and forty years' standing, fine sound specimens of that vanishing class, the Tuscan gentleman farmer, who, it is to be feared, would worry themselves into a serious illness if anything occurred to hinder them from resorting to the annual prevention of the Montecatini cure. There are those, too, who say that besides curing the body, the waters of Montecatini strengthen the brain and quicken dull wits, but this theory has not, that I could hear of, found favour with Dr. Grocco, the leading physician of the Baths. Perhaps he fears that an acknowledgment of it would cause a too formidable inroad of dunces and dunderheads, who might be hurtful to the sick, and would certainly lower the tone of the sound.

The cure consists in drinking waters and taking baths. There are a number of pump-houses, very elegant some of them, mostly the property of the State, but now under the management of a private and very enterprising company. The principal of these are the RR. Terme Leopoldine, the Tettuccio, the Rinfresco, the Bagno Regio, the Olivo, the Regina, and the Savi. The only springs of importance in private hands which are now open, are the Tamerici. There is nothing to show that the waters of Montecatini, like so many other springs in Italy, were known to the Romans. They first



appear in history in the 14th century, when the waters of the Tettuccio alone had been discovered. Montecatini for a long while fell into neglect and disrepute. It was Peter Leopold, the second Grand Duke of the House of Lorraine-Hapsburg (reigned 1745-1790), who raised Montecatini into the front rank of watering-places, and to him entirely it owes its present beautiful aspect and flourishing condition. The Terme Leopoldine, so called in his honour, is a fine red-brick colonnaded building, still redolent of all that simple elegance peculiar to the 18th century. As we enter the handsome vestibule, so strongly has the place preserved its original character that we fully expect to see a crowd such as Chesterfield saw at Bath or Chatham at Tunbridge Wells, an assembly wearing wigs and patches, ivory-hilted swords, satin knee-breeches, paste buckles, laced stomachers, and Pompadour gowns.

The waters of the Terme Leopoldine are only used externally. The Tettuccio is the favourite morning lounge. Here the waters of the other springs, Olivo, Regina, and Savi, may be had in *fiaschi*, so that many people do not budge outside the great rendezvous all morning. The Tettuccio is of considerable dimensions, tastefully laid out with plants, and sheltered from the fierce heat by vast expanses of canvas. The hearty cheeriness of the Tuscans is proverbial, and the din of some

two thousand Tuscan voices in one and the same covered inclosure is a new and startling experience. All the voices are discussing, with obvious relish and unnecessary detail, symptoms, and the present progress of the cure ; all the owners of the voices are apparently in the most robust health—certainly none of them are affected in the lungs. Only once in the morning is the babel of voices hushed for a moment. “ *Eccolo ! eccolo !* ” one hears on all sides. There is no need to say who is meant. Verdi, attended by Boito and Tamagno, has entered the establishment, and a moment of reverent silence falls upon the gossiping crowd. Verdi never misses his ten days at Montecatini every July, and he attributes his long life of eighty-six years and his hale old age to the beneficent effects of a regular sojourn at Montecatini. The Rinfresco is the afternoon lounge. It is a pleasant garden with the great spring of crystal clear water bubbling up in the middle. Here the voices do not drown the band ; the serious part of the cure is done with for the day, and an air of something like peace has come over even vivacious Neapolitans and Sicilians. The waters of the Rinfresco are drunk copiously during the afternoon, but that is only a make-believe business. The water is perfectly harmless, and has no other effect than of doing what its name implies — refreshing. There is a delightful little swimming bath at the Rinfresco, a daily

dip in which is perfectly consonant with the cure.

The waters of Montecatini are limpid as crystal, and free from all smell. They are salt to the taste, but pleasant and palatable, having no trace of astringency or bitterness. They are essentially refreshing, and seem at the very time of drinking to convey a savour of health and the conviction of their curative powers. A bilious subject once exclaimed that he *hungered* for some of the waters of Montecatini, and the paradoxical phrase is certainly the most forcible I ever heard expressive of thirst. The Tamerici, Savi, Olivo, and Regina waters are powerfully aperient; Tettuccio is mild, and if taken alone must be consumed in great quantities; Rinfresco, as we have seen, is more or less of a formality. A 50c. ticket admits once a day to all the springs which belong to the Company; there is, of course, a further small charge for using the waters which are private property like the Tamerici (30c.). At all the springs the poor are given the water gratis, and there is even a section of baths for them at the Terme Leopoldine.

The springs of Montecatini belong to the class of muriated waters. Here, for the benefit of those who care for such things, is an analysis of three of them :—

	<i>Tettuccio.</i>	<i>Olivo.</i>	<i>Regina.</i>
Oxygen . . . .	0.0652	0.0037	0.0039
Azoto . . . .	0.1922	0.0255	0.0162
Carbonic Acid Gas .	0.2861	...	...
Bicarbonate of Lime .	0.0241	0.3228	0.2578
" of Magnesia	0.0736	0.1126	0.1488
" of Iron .	...	0.0086	0.0022
Sulphate of Lime . .	0.5219	0.3252	0.8735
" of Potassium .	0.0585	0.0787	0.1648
" of Soda . . .	0.3087	0.8293	0.0669
Chloride of Sodium .	4.6076	6.2109	10.4788
" of Magnesia .	0.4508	0.1258	0.2130
Bromides . . . .	...	...	traces
Iodides . . . .	...	...	traces
Fluorides . . . .	...	...	traces
Phosphate of Iron .	...	0.0195	0.0046
" of Alum . .	0.0087	0.0063	0.0004
" of Lime . .	...	...	...
Salts of Manganese .	...	...	traces
Lithium . . . .	...	...	traces
Silicic Acid . . . .	...	0.0082	0.0065
Nitrates . . . .	traces	...	traces
Organic Substances .	...	0.0072	traces <sup>1</sup>

The cure is differently carried out by different people according to fancy and the Doctor's orders. The waters should be taken fasting, and more than one kind of water is nearly always recommended. Here is a programme of a cure drawn up by the present writer, based on practical experience and the happiest results. Ailment : a "touch of liver," but the programme is equally suitable to people in the soundest health :—

Rise at 6 A.M. Sally forth at 7. Stroll, very leisurely, to the Tamerici spring ( $\frac{1}{2}$  mile). Drink one glass of water, and pass a quarter of an

<sup>1</sup> Plinio Schivardi : "Le Acque Minerali d'Italia," page 332.



hour. Then on to Olivo, Regina, and Savi. Drink one glass of water and pass a quarter of an hour at each. Then to the gay rendezvous at the Tettuccio. Drink four glasses of water and pass a couple of hours reading, chatting, overhauling people, and listening to the band when it can be heard above the din of voices. Stroll, always very leisurely, back to the hotel. Lunch 11 to 12. Smoke, chat, and read 12 to 1. Sleep soundly, during the great heat, 1 to 4. Out again. Crawl gently to the Rinfresco. Have half-an-hour's paddle in the plunge. Drink two glasses of water for the sake of appearances. Then another gentle stroll or drive, or better still take the Funicular Railway up to Montecatini Alto and get a breath of mountain air. Dinner 7. Afterwards to the *Variétés*, to the ball at the Casino, to the travelling circus, the travelling conjuror, or the travelling concert-giver. Bed when you please. *N.B.*—Everything to be done very leisurely: there is no hurry in the world, and the heat is great.

Many people fear a cure at a watering-place on account of the severe dietetic regime to which they are subjected. But the famous Dr. Grocco, the leading physician at Montecatini, is not over severe. You may not eat oysters or tunny, but then who wants to eat oysters in August, or tunny outside of Lent. If you insist upon having eggs,

they may not be hard boiled. Crouste-au-pôt and bouillabaisse are on the forbidden list, but the most fastidious *gourmet* can hardly object to the many varieties of plain consommés and purées for ten days. You must do without eel, carp, lobster, salmon (which cannot be got in Tuscany even if wanted), and cuttlefish (which no Englishman would look at even if provided); but there is surely no occasion to grumble when one may still eat mullet, soles, whiting, trout, and *dentale*. Beef, mutton, veal, chicken, turkey, pheasant, snipe, pigeon, quail—all may be freely eaten. It seems at first sight as if there were nothing else left to prohibit; but pig, boar, hare, goose, duck, teal, and liver are taboo. It is only in the matter of what we drink that the Doctor is a trifle severe. For ten days we should try and be content with a simple table wine, white or red—no whisky, no punch or negus (in a Tuscan August, too—what a deprivation!), no wines of Spain or Portugal or Sicily, and above all, no liqueurs.

There are excellent hotels at Montecatini. The *Locanda Maggiore*, a vast and handsome 18th century pile built by the Grand Duke Peter Leopold, is the principal one. In this building are situated the Post-Office, the Theatre, and the Casino. The *Pace* is another first-class hotel. Both are near the station, whence a beautiful avenue of ilex and maples, flanked on either side by rich gardens and picturesque villas, leads past

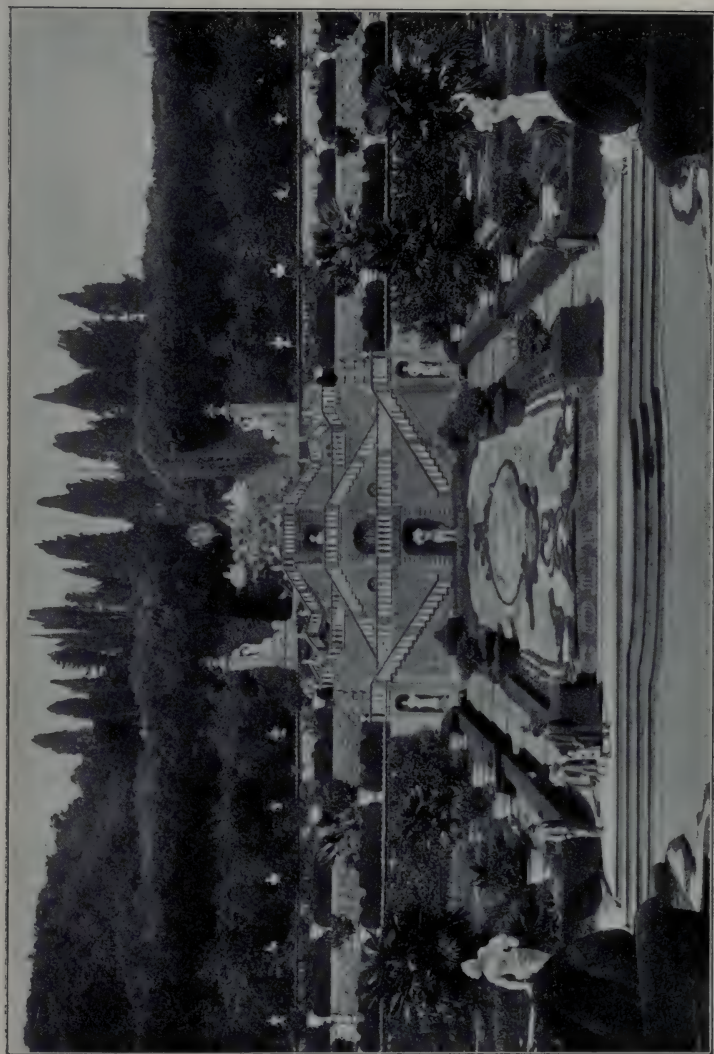
the Terme Leopoldine and the other pump-houses, straight to the rendezvous of the Tettuccio. There are other excellent hotels, and plenty of pensions and lodgings.

The moving spirit of Montecatini is Dr. Pietro Grocco, whose name will be well known to readers of the *Lancet*, for he enjoys far more than a merely Italian celebrity. He resides in Florence, where his clientèle is enormous, and he is in constant requisition all over the Kingdom. But the passion of his life is Montecatini, in whose waters he has unbounded faith. He is to be found at all hours during the season, either at the *Locanda Maggiore* or in his consulting-room at the Tettuccio. In the interests of busy London patients I recommend his arrangements for receiving interviews to the busy physicians of Harley Street. Let us say that he receives at the Tettuccio at 9 o'clock, and that forty of us want to see him that morning. His vigilant *custos* gives to each of us a number in the order in which we arrive. Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, say, will wait their turn at once; but it is obviously useless for say Nos. 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, to wait at the beginning of the morning, and they go off to drink the waters and hear the band. Dr. Grocco's system is that the lowest number in waiting should have precedence of all others. No. 23, we will say, returns while No. 31 is consulting, and 23 goes in immediately after 31, much to the annoyance of 32, who has

been waiting half-an-hour and knew nothing of the system. But the arrangement works well: it sets the patient free, and saves time, temper, mental anxiety, and a world of weary waiting.

Very delightful are the excursions which may be made from Montecatini. The visitor should by no means fail to drive over to Collodi and see the garden of the Lucchese Marquis Garzoni, famous in Italy, and the very model of an Italian garden with its statues and busts, its fountains and falls, its fantastic beds and borders, and its noble terraces. Busy little Pescia, too, is close at hand; so is artistic Pistoia; and industrious and beautiful Lucca is not far distant. Eight minutes in the newly built Funicular Railway brings one to the summit of Montecatini Alto, 1300 feet above the level of the Tyrrhenian Sea, where a complete change of air may be had for the minimum of bodily exertion. The Funicular runs every half-hour, or every quarter of an hour if there be four passengers. This easy access to hilltop breezes forms one of the great charms of residence at the Baths. There is now a good restaurant in the old-world township, and it is pleasant to stay up there and dine, and see the sun set over the wonderful panorama of the Valley of the Nievole. The echoes of music and laughter, the shrill cries of children at play, the songs of home-going peasants, the rhythmical rumble of the ox-waggons, the jingling bells of country





*Photograph by*

THE GIARDINO GARZONI AT COLLODI

MONTABONE, Florence

*To face p. 276*

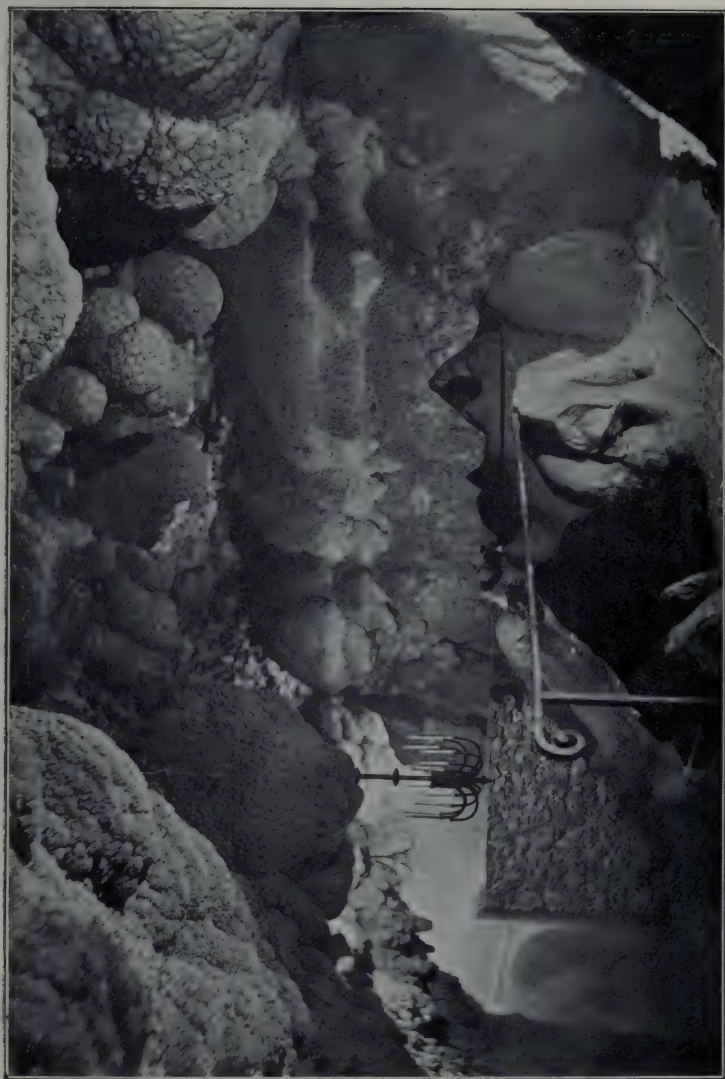


carriages, the cheery crack! crack! crack! of the drivers' whips—all these sounds rise up to us here where we are, mingled with the melodious hum of insects and the ceaseless soothing sing-song of the frogs and the unwearied *cicale*. It is a moment of peace and blissful beauty such as is only to be found in this Garden of the Garden of Italy.

But the most remarkable sight near Montecatini, distant only three miles, is the Grotto Giusti at Monsummano. The Grotto was discovered accidentally in 1849, and the discovery of its healing properties was likewise due to chance: a rheumatic peasant, one of the first crowd of curious sight-seers, came out of the Grotto with his pains wonderfully the better. The Grotto is situated at the base of Monte Monsummano, on property which belonged to the father of Giuseppe Giusti (1809–1850), the pet poet of the Italian Revolution. It is covered with a splendour of stalactites and stalagmites, and stretches a thousand feet or more into the bowels of the mountain. The entrance to it is now covered by a handsome bathing establishment which adjoins a first-class hotel, the Vittorio Emanuele. For the Grotto is nothing else but a huge natural vapour-bath. It is a sovereign remedy for gout and rheumatism, especially, people say, for the former. The temperature ranges from 80° F. at the entrance to 95° F. in the

nether regions, and this variation, coupled with the fact that it descends to a considerable depth, has suggested to the lively Italian imagination to divide the Grotto into three parts, Paradiso, Purgatorio, and Inferno. I could not help observing as I entered that the Paradiso was empty, and that there were but few souls in the Purgatorio, while in the Inferno there was scarcely sitting room. The Inferno is an imposing natural vault comfortably arranged with chairs and benches. It is paved with wooden boards and with the good intentions of countless patients who have here forsworn forbidden meats and drinks. The whole Grotto is lit by electric light, which finely throws out the fantastic extravagancies of its myriad stalactites and stalagmites. Science, the physician in charge told me, cannot account satisfactorily for the heat in the Grotto; it does not as might be thought proceed from its many hot springs, for the water in these is *below* the temperature of the air. The Grotto of Monsummano has attracted much attention in Germany. Unlike Montecatini, plenty of foreigners come here, excepting only Englishmen, which is strange considering the large legacy of gout which our three-bottle grandsires have left us. The treatment after an hour's perspiration is various: rheumatic patients are tucked away in blankets to perspire yet more; others are played upon





THE GROTTO OF MONSUMMANO (PURGATORY)

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J.

by the powerful douche or revel in a dip in the splendid plunge. A bath in the Grotto is, as will be seen, an agreeable and interesting variant to the daily round at Montecatini.

The Baths of Montecatini are in no need of visitors. Some 40,000 people, nearly all of them Italians, come here every season, and there are days in July and August when it would be unwise to arrive without having first secured rooms. It is singular indeed that no foreigners come to this delightful place. In part, I suppose, it is not sufficiently well known, in part the summer heats of Italy strike terror into the hearts of Northerners, but I never yet met the Englishman who had tried Montecatini that did not go away with its praises on his lips, and its health-marks writ large on every lineament of his countenance.



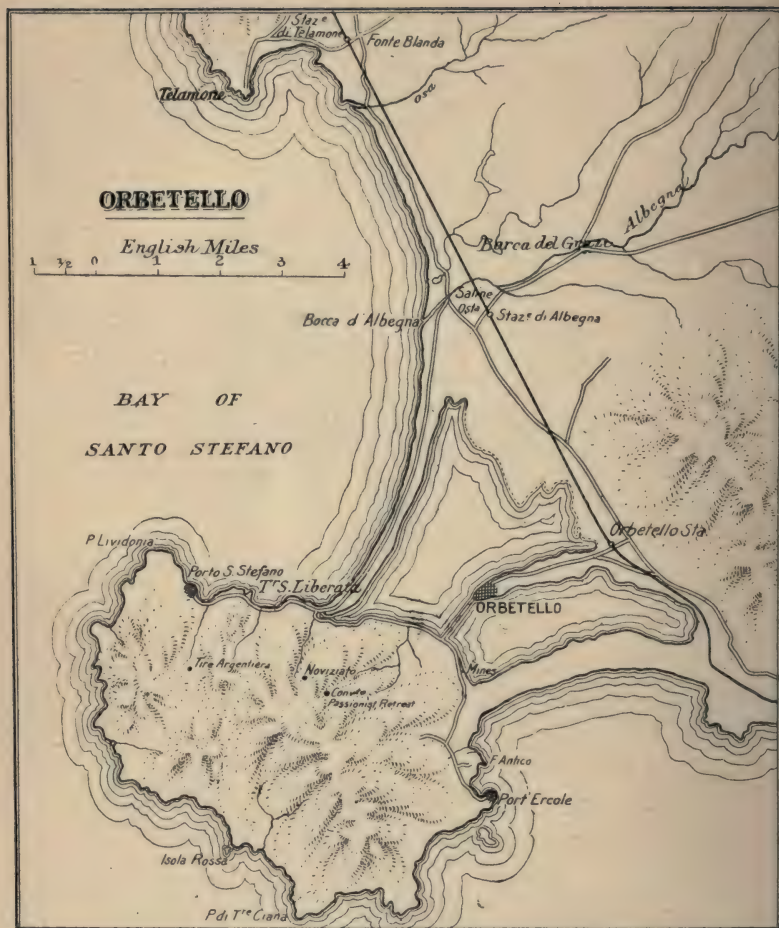


SOME TUSCAN STRONGHOLDS

THE SPANISH PRAESIDIA







MONTE ARGENTARIO AND ORBETELLO

To face p. 283





ORBETELLO

## SOME TUSCAN STRONGHOLDS: THE SPANISH PRAESIDIA

IN the present chapter I have to deal with a subject that is very difficult indeed to write about. I have to speak of history of the most complex order, a mere tissue of minute and most evasive detail ; of natural marvels such as nature offers no otherwhither ; of an industry that exists but here, and not elsewhere, in the Italian Peninsula ; of a people that by a fortuitous admixture of blood has no parallel to it in the Universe ; of a Saint of the Church who, born but six weeks before Voltaire, did yet revive in his person all the marvels of legendary Christianity ; of a Religious Order that, founded in the eighteenth century, resembles no other, and yet contains within itself all the essential elements of every Religious Order

that had gone before it, and of every Religious Congregation that has come after it. In short, I have to speak of the Spanish Praesidia, what that State was, what its territories have become, what still may be seen there of its past glory and importance, what is doing there now in the days of its aggregation to Modern Italy. And all this in a chapter which must be brief, not in a volume which should be solid and well-reasoned and very detailed, as befits the serious treatment due to even the tiniest of the Italian States.

Orbetello, the capital of this singular State, was very well known to the hungry traveller on the road to Rome. At Orbetello Station, the Rome express would wait twenty minutes, and there the traveller could have a hasty and not ill-cooked meal. But the restaurant car has come in since : there is no reason now for the Orbetello refreshment-room, and it has been closed and relegated in a reduced form to Grosseto, the capital of the Province—but so recently that this news may still be news to some few travellers.

The natural situation of Orbetello is remarkable. I know of no other district in Italy that looks so singular upon the map. A glance at the map alone suffices to arouse all our curiosity, and of itself makes us desire to know something of this strange-looking corner of the earth. The station of Orbetello is situated at the base of a narrow

tongue of land, two miles in length and never more than half a mile in breadth, which shoots forth into a vast salt-water lake, and on the very tip of this tongue lies, closely packed, the town of Orbetello itself. To the north and to the south of the town, and forming the boundaries of this lake, run narrowest strips of sandbank, two great arms which connect Monte Argentario, once an island, with the mainland. I must be more precise: the southern strip, called the Tombolo della Feniglia, has now a narrow canal—the canal of Ansedonia—cut in its continental base; the northern strip, called the Tombolo della Gianella, has never been suffered to join the mountain, and through a narrow shallow channel, navigable only by row-boats, all the fish of the sea rush into the inland lake to become the easy prey of the fisherman. Look again at the map and note that the Feniglia is broader than the Gianella. This is caused by the boisterous *libeccio* or south-west wind, which beats here in its full force and is forever casting up the sand of the sea, and likewise whirling clouds of the sand of the earth into the shallow bottom of the lake. The northern strip is inhabited and cultivated; the southern strip a wilderness of sand. Another glance at the map: there is a straight line running through the middle of the lake from the town to the mountain. That is a fine road, three-quarters of a mile in length, called the *diga*, made by the Grand Duke

Leopold II. in 1842, and giving comfortable access from the mainland to the ocean mountain. Before that date the people of Orbetello used to go over to Monte Argentario by boat, seldom enough by the road on the Feniglia, for that was far from the town.<sup>1</sup> The great lake is of a superficies of about 10 square miles; its average depth not more than 3 feet, and it is very full of fish. There are no restrictions upon fishing in the southern half; fishing in the northern half is reserved to the Municipality, which adds quite 50,000 livres a year to the town revenues from this source. Much of the fishing is done at night-time, and by the primitive process of spearing. It is a pretty sight at night to see some threescore boats, each with a flaming brazier in the bows to attract the gullible fish, and it is exciting to watch the neat spearing of the expert fishermen. The lake abounds in *capitoni*, a fat tasty eel, which can be bought cheaply enough until Christmas is coming on; then the *capitoni* can scarce be had for love or money, for no self-respecting Roman or Neapolitan passes the vigil of Christmas eve without eating of this fish, and the *capitoni* of the lake of Orbetello all go—sometimes in the tanks of sailing ships—to the markets of Rome and Naples. The two sides of the lake communicate with one another by little tunnels under the causeway. A good high-road runs round Monte

<sup>1</sup> The road is now almost buried under the sand.



Argentario as far as Porto Santo Stefano on the northern side, and as far as Port'Ercole on the southern. There is no road on the seaward side of the mountain, and only mountain paths over the mountain itself. Seawards, on the summit, is a modern fort, of which nothing is visible save the top of a slender conning-tower, from which the gunnery officer can deal death and destruction by mathematical rule.

We are in the dreaded malarial Maremma, but the climate of Orbetello is sweet and healthy. The citizens of Grosseto flock here, and to Santo Stefano, and Port'Ercole, in the summer months, for their own city has become dangerous. It is easy to understand the salubrity of Santo Stefano and Port'Ercole, for they are far away out at sea; but Orbetello lies low in the midst of a shallow lake, and should be sufficiently malarial. Be that as it may, Orbetello is said to be healthier than either, and I certainly noticed a quality of salubrious softness in the air which I have never felt in any other part of Tuscany. The lake is growing shallower, and that will assuredly become a danger to the health of the town. The citizens are well aware that it should be deepened, but alas! we are in Italy, worried by a financial problem, and where is the money to come from? I would myself dredge the lake to a depth of seven feet all over, if I might, in return, have the fishing rights for seven years to come.

There is £5000 a year to be made out of the Orbetello fisheries, well managed. The Municipality make £2000 a year out of half the lake, with but primitive and slender resources at their disposal. And if only the lake were dredged to take line-of-battle ships, and the Monte were properly fortified, what a safe shelter, what a dread inexpugnable position it would become!

Everything about this singular place is singular and unique. One of its many unique features is that it contains the only Manganese Iron Ore Mine in Italy. The mine is situated about half a mile to the south of the *diga*, on the road to Port'Ercole. It is active, rich and productive, yields at least 30,000 tons in the year, employs 250 men, and works night and day. What is singular, too, is that it is worked by Englishmen, the Messrs. Rae of Leghorn and London: there seems to be no corner of Italy which does not bear traces of English influence and English capital, but on Monte Argentario, so removed and remote does it seem from the busy world, English influence comes as something of a surprise. There are nine kilometres of tunnels in the mountain-side, and galleries many storeys high: the bowels of the earth are here all ready prepared for the comfortable inspection of the geologist, but the mine has been working for twenty-five years, and I learned with astonishment that not a single man of science had been

near the place to study the secrets of the earth which have here so conveniently been laid bare for him. As the mine faces the shallow lake, loading there would be impossible even if there were a proper outlet to the sea, and the ore is taken round by a light railway to the Scalo di Santa Liberata in the Bay of Santo Stefano. Here it is transported by lighters to British ships, which lie out in the roadstead, safe behind the shelter of the lofty Monte Argentario.

At Santa Liberata it is well to ask for the loan of a boat and go out into the sea, and see beneath the sea the huge remnants of what I take to have been a vast Roman *piscina*, once rising high above the water's edge. There are great walls or masonry ten feet thick, marking out in well-defined spaces large enclosures or tanks. On the rocky coast are the elaborate ruins of arches—possibly the cellarage of a Roman villa?—and several manifest aqueducts; higher up the hill is a Roman reservoir. Signor Adolfo del Rosso, late Syndic of Orbetello, has endeavoured to reconstruct the place and explain its object.<sup>1</sup> He considers that these tanks built into the sea were filled with fresh water from the mountain, and used for *catching* fish. The Muggine, he says, cannot be caught for stocking with a net; if its scales are touched it soon dies. The Emperors insisted upon having Muggine at all

<sup>1</sup> In the *Etruria Nuova* of the 15th April 1900.

times, and therefore stocks had somehow to be found and kept. Signor del Rosso opines that it was done on this wise: the Muggine is a great glutton of fresh water; a strong jet of such water was shot from the tank through a hole below the sea-level; it attracted the Muggine, who immediately followed up the fresh water track into the tanks, and could not get out again. Signor del Rosso may be quite right; I know nothing whatsoever about the matter; I do but call attention to a spot that may be well worth the careful study of experts, for I doubt if there be similar ruins, equally well-preserved and complete, in any other part of Italy.<sup>1</sup>

The history of Orbetello and Monte Argentario is as curious, as fantastic, as surprising as any in the dazzling mosaic of historic States which went to make up the many-tinted whole of the Italian Peninsula. When the Republic of Siena came to an end in the middle of the sixteenth century it had a seaboard. This embraced the whole of the modern Province of Grosseto: Orbetello was one of its forts, and Telamone, Santo Stefano, and Port'Ercole were among its ports. Charles V. interfered in the affairs of the Republic, for it was a fief of the Holy Roman Empire. For disloyalty (and incompetence) he treated it as a lapsed fief, and gave it to his son

<sup>1</sup> I tried to photograph the ruined arches, but a choppy sea was against operations.



Philip. In 1557, the astute Cosimo, Grand Duke of Tuscany, succeeded in obtaining from Philip, now King of Spain, the investiture of the Sienese State as a fief. But Philip II., who had a keen eye for the natural advantages of a place that lent itself to fortification, reserved to himself the littoral of the old Republic, embracing Orbetello, Telamone, Monte Argentario with Porto Santo Stefano and Port'Ercole, and the little island of Giannutri. From 1557 to 1713 this important corner of Italian soil remained a purely Spanish State, governed by a Spanish Governor and garrisoned by Spanish soldiery. Philip gave to it the name of the States of the Praesidia, or *Reali Stati dei Presidii* as it was called in Italian. And since I have said that its history is unique, look what differentiated it from every other State in the Peninsula. In Italy there were but two absolute sovereignties, the States of the Church and the Republic of Venice: all the other States were fiefs holding either from the Pope, the Emperor, or the King of Spain. Philip II. himself held Naples and Sicily from the Pope; the Republics of Genoa and Lucca, the Duke of Savoy and the Duke of Modena held from the Emperor; the Grand Duke of Tuscany held Florence from the Emperor, Siena from the King of Spain, and Radicofani from the Pope. And so on through the whole list. But the State of the Spanish Praesidia was neither absolute sovereignty nor

fief: it was a possession of the House of the Spanish Hapsburgs, and there was no other corner of Italian soil which had a precisely similar status. In 1738, when by the Treaty of Vienna Charles, the son of Philip V. of Spain, was recognised as King of the Two Sicilies, the Praesidia became an appanage of the Neapolitan King, but while he continued to hold his Kingdom from the Pope, the Praesidia remained a possession of his House. From 1713 to 1738 the State had passed by Treaty to the Emperor, and was mainly garrisoned by Neapolitan and German soldiers. In 1801 it was added to the new Kingdom of Etruria, and not until 1814 was it absorbed by the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. I must not forget to mention that in 1602 the Spanish King, Philip III., obtained Porto Longone in the Island of Elba on the same terms, and it became part of the *Stati dei Presidii*, a fine shelter for the Spanish Fleet, and an important base for operations in defence of the Spanish mainland possessions.

Such, briefly outlined, are the dry bones of the history of this noteworthy State, but the dry bones become clothed with vividest realities ere you have been twenty-four hours in Orbetello. For on all sides of you Spanish memories and Spanish influences spring into life. Over the outer gate of the town stands the *ecu complet* of Spain, and an inscription of 1692 bearing the



*Photograph by*

SPANISH ENTRANCE-GATE TO ORBETELLO

ULIVI, Orbetello

*To face p. 292*





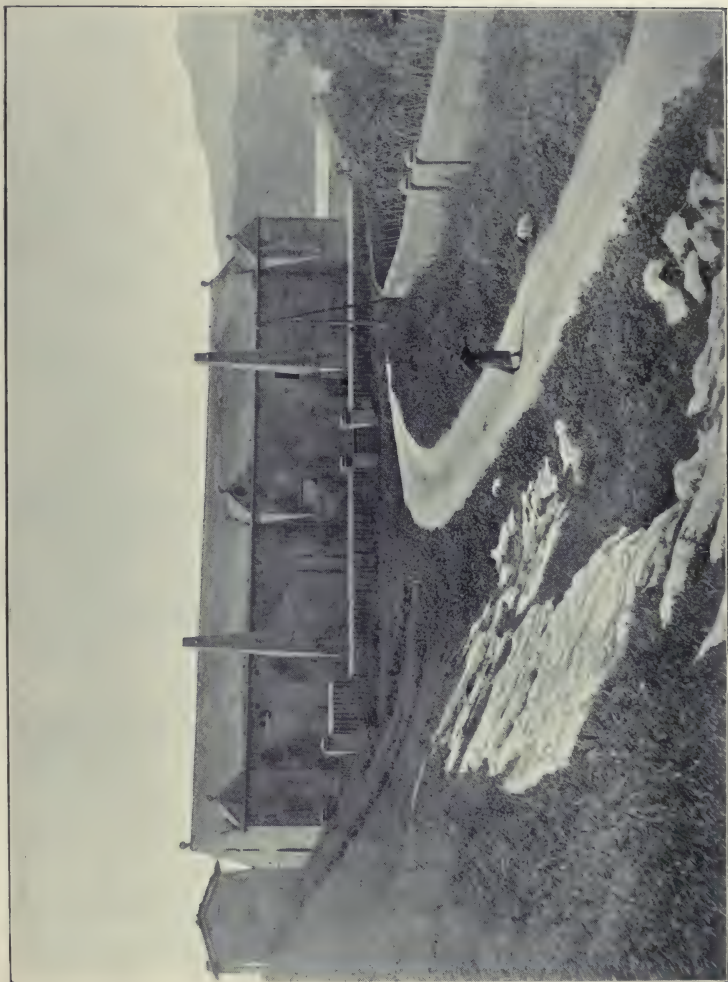
name of Charles II., King of Spain, King of the Two Sicilies, King of all the Indies ; over the inner gate are the arms of the same monarch and another inscription (1697); the Spanish arms are on a solid Spanish powder-magazine just within the walls; the Spanish arms are over the Municipal building ; the former residence of the Governor is surmounted by a tower and wrought-ironwork of unmistakably Spanish craftsmanship ; the Church of San Francesco is full of epitaphs writ in pure Castilian ; half the archives of the Municipality are in the same language ; the very men and women have many of them a Spanish rather than an Italian cast. I came across Diaz de Palma, and Nunez (now writ Nugnes), and Sanchez (now spelled Sances), and Velasco which must assuredly have been Velasquez. Spain seemed to live in every corner, but that I could trace no Iberian corruptions in the very excellent Tuscan spoken by the natives. Orbetello from the land side—and who could get at it from the sea?<sup>1</sup>—was heavily fortified. The Spanish fortifications still survive in all their glory. These were the kind of fortifications that my Uncle Toby sat down before at Namur, where he got the wound in his groin ; these were the kind of fortifications that he and Corporal Trim set up in miniature in the bowling green. Stevinus has described them, and so has the Count de

<sup>1</sup> Seawards there are but some walls of polygonal Pelasgic masonry, much admired by the learned in such matters.

Pagan, and the Chevalier de Ville, and the Marshal Vauban. Here are the escarps and counterscarps, the horn-works and demi-bastions, the saps, mines, blinds, palisadoes, ravelins, half-moons, and "such trumpery," which filled my dear Uncle Toby's brains, and drew from my father, Mr. Walter Shandy, that hasty and unkind rebuke which lives and will forever live in the choicest pages of English pathos. The right-conditioned man is not long in Orbetello without communing with the shade of my Uncle Toby.

Orbetello has, besides its fortifications, some few other objects of interest. The Collegiate Church of the Assumption is interesting, and its simple Gothic façade, added to in baroque days, is rather striking. There are the Cyclopean walls and Spanish tower which I have mentioned. The traveller acquainted with Tuscan and Castilian, can pass some exciting hours at the Municipality in turning over the pages of the "*Libro d'Oro*," and studying the "*statuti*" of the old State. Note another peculiarity of Orbetello: it is in no diocese, but draws its spiritual jurisdiction direct from the Titular Abbot of the Tre Fontane at Rome. The population of the city is about 4000.

Port'Ercole is well worth a visit. The Gothic entrance-gate is surmounted by a Spanish tower and ironwork, like the one at Orbetello. The Spanish arms which stood over the entrance have been removed to a neighbouring house. There



*Photograph by*

SPANISH POWDER-MAGAZINE, ORBETELLO

Mrs. CARMICHAEL

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are perhaps not more than 400 people in this once important strategical position ; they are busily engaged in fishing, and have a fine sheltered harbour. High above the steeply-placed, crumbling old village is the Rocca, once a terror to the enemies of Spain, now a large convict prison. It is an interesting study as a bit of seventeenth-century fortification, and likewise as the model of a well-ordered modern prison. On the lofty hill at the opposite side of the bay stands Forte Filippo, yet another powerful fort, built by order of Philip II. of Spain. Between the cross-fire from these two deadly eminences, no enemy could ever hope to enter the harbour and live. Here, too, there are convicts, some eighty or ninety ; here, too, the order is perfect, and the contented cheerfulness quite surprising. I succeeded in obtaining leave from Rome to visit both establishments, and had the further good fortune of the personal chaperonage of the kindly and courteous Director. The system is not cellular in these prisons: the convicts live in wards and seem very sociable, and yet thoroughly under discipline. As we entered, the ward sprang to attention and formed a double row. There were many fine handsome lads among them, and but few faces of the criminally vicious type. We were among so-called "political" prisoners here, and you might note the young visionary proud of his martyrdom, and the poor dupe long repented of his subversive deeds. Many

of them had been out in the May risings of 1898. How glad they seemed of this unlooked-for visit from the outside world, and how glad of a word from their kindly Director.

"How old are you, my lad?" he would say to one of them.

"Twenty-four, sir."

"And how long have you got?"

"Twenty years, sir."

"Try by good conduct to reduce your sentence."

"God grant it, sir!"

"And you, my boy, how old are you?" addressing another.

"Twenty, sir."

"And how long are you in for?"

"Twenty-two years, sir."

"Ah! Try, like a good lad, by good conduct, to reduce your sentence."

"I will indeed, sir!"

And so we walked down one melancholy line and up the other. It was a relief to be outside the grim donjon once more, and to look down into the bay where a flotilla of fishing-boats was bearing a freight of free Italian fishermen far out into the free and open sea.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> To folklorists:—I unearthed a curious custom at Port'Ercole, new to me. When a Port'Ercolese loses his mother-in-law, he lets his beard grow for forty days, but whether as a sign of mourning, or as evidence of newly acquired freedom, I could not well determine.

The traveller should likewise not fail to visit Porto Santo Stefano on the other side of the mountain. It is quite a busy place of some 4000 souls, and ever so picturesque. The deep marine blue of the fishermen's blouses set against the tawny and russet tints of the town, gives a charming effect of colour. Of course there is a big Spanish fort here, now deserted and falling to ruins. Anchovies caught about Gorgona are cured here, and I even noticed a French sardine factory. From Porto Santo Stefano a little packet-boat runs daily to and from the Island of Giglio, and a Rubattino boat leaves weekly for Leghorn, taking two days upon the voyage and touching at all the islands of the Tuscan Archipelago. It is an enchanting and most varied sea-trip. The boat stays overnight at Portoferraio in the Island of Elba, and gives time for an evening drive to Napoleon's country villa of San Martino.

Telamone, at the extreme northern end of the Stati dei Presidii, is scarcely worth a visit. It is crumbling away, and the malaria here is very deadly. There are no longer any fisherfolk : the men work as charcoal-burners in the Maremma, and the charcoal is sent out in barges from Telamone to the sailing-ships lying in the bay. The vasty Spanish keep has been turned into a comfortable coastguard barrack. Of Spanish memories I could trace but one small inscription,

and a chalice in the sacristy of the Parish Church on the foot of which was engraven in Castilian, "De la Capilla del cuerpo de guardia." But the chalice put the presence of a Spanish occupation and a Spanish garrison beyond all doubt, and conjured up the daily devotions of the troops of his Catholic Majesty. The population of Telamone has shrunk away to about two hundred.

Orbetello has been subjected to many sieges, but to one at least that is of the first order and takes rank in history. You cannot be long in the town without hearing of it, and you will rise in the estimation of the Orbetellani by knowing something about it. I therefore spare space for the briefest description. France and Spain were at war in 1646. The wily Mazarin determined upon a secret descent on the Spanish strongholds in Tuscany. A large fleet was secretly fitted out at Marseilles, and a force of 9000 men, both horse and foot, were embarked upon it. The generalissimo of the expedition was a very notable warrior: Thomas of Savoy, Prince of Carignan, ancestor in the direct line of King Humbert, and so potent was his military valour that he has transmitted physical pluck to each and all of his descendants. This French fleet arrived in the Bay of Santo Stefano on the 8th May 1646, and anchored about the middle of it. Prince Thomas immediately organised three shore parties: the central party made for the Spanish fort of Le



Saline (consult the map), and the Spanish garrison of thirty fled in affright before the invaders; Telamone surrendered after trifling bombardment; Santo Stefano yielded next day. Observe the consequence: the littoral from Telamone to the northern arm of the lake was free for a leisurely disembarkment of the French forces. But Thomas, if prudent, was never leisurely, and by the 10th of May he was marching along the Aurelian Way, and invading the narrow tongue of land on the tip of which Orbetello is placed. The Governor of Orbetello, Carlo della Gatta, was likewise a warrior whom history should not forget. He was no Spaniard, but a Neapolitan, though, of course, a subject of his Catholic Majesty. And note, *en passant*, an instructive situation which could have occurred nowhere else save in much-divided Italy: Thomas, an Italian Prince, commanding a French army, found himself opposed to della Gatta, an Italian soldier commanding a Spanish garrison. Della Gatta had but three hundred troops in his stronghold, but the Orbetellani loved their Spanish masters who asked for next to no taxes, and who enrolled no soldiers that were not volunteers, and men, women, and children turned out to fight for the Spaniard. The resistance was heroic. Della Gatta worked miracles and organised marvels. Nothing daunted him. He lost his son, poor man, shot down on the walls beside him, and the

boy's epitaph is still very legible in the Church of San Francesco at Orbetello.<sup>1</sup> The French closed right up to the town; they filled the lake on the other side with flat-bottomed boats armed with murderous little mortars; they got upon the very walls in fierce hand-to-hand encounters. All was in vain: della Gatta beat them back again and again. They could not spare men and ships to blockade Port'Ercole, and through this source the Spanish commander received aid from the Vice-roy of Naples. At length the Spanish fleet appeared upon the scene, and on the 18th July 1646 Prince Thomas was obliged to raise the siege, having sustained the first and only severe check which he had ever known in his warlike career. 'Twas an heroic episode, but it needs to be told with ample and ungrudging detail.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> D. O. M.  
 HOC JACET IN TUMULO  
 JOSEPH CAROLI DE GATTA  
 IMPERATORIS EXERCITUS  
 HORUM PRAESIDIORUM ETRURIAE  
 FILIUS  
 QUI SIMUL CUM PATRE  
 DEFENDENDUM ORBETELLUM  
 AB OBSIDIONE FRANCORUM  
 TORMENTI MURALIS GLOBO PERCUSSUS  
 OBIIT  
 AETATIS SUAE ANNO XVIII.  
 PRIDIE KALENDIS JULII  
 MDCXXXVI.

<sup>2</sup> It has been told with generous detail by Dr. Alfonso Ademollo in his work "L'Assedio di Orbetello dell'anno 1646," Grosseto, 1883, and with the help of a large map, the book becomes lively and absorbing to the last degree.

I have made no secret in this book of my liking for Religious and Religious Orders. I recommend every traveller, for his good, to cultivate a similar partiality, and to make for the nearest Convent, however remote the spot, however inaccessible the Conventual building. In a Convent he is sure to learn the local traditions, to improve his history, and to see interesting and curious things. And in a Convent he is also sure of a cheerful welcome, kindly entertainment, and the best hospitality that the place can afford. I confess that it was rather the fact that the Mother House of the Passionist Order is situated on one of the eminences of Monte Argentario, than any interest in Spanish fortifications, which first drew my footsteps into the States of the Praesidia.

The famous Passionist Order is of so recent institution, its saintly founder lived so near our own times, that we approach it with more than usual curiosity, for we see here the possibility of accurately following the genesis and growth of a Legend, of testing relics, and of verifying miracles. Paolo Francesco Danei, known to all the world as St. Paul of the Cross, was born on the 3rd January 1694 at Ovada, in the Republic of Genoa, and died at Rome on the 18th October 1775, only the other day, as it seems, when we are talking of a fully canonised Saint. In 1720 he had, in his native place, a vision—which he is careful to tell us was not a corporal vision, “*ma in Dio*”—

of the future Passionist habit, and he obtained the leave of his Bishop to wear this habit. In the same year he wrote the Rule of the future institution, almost by inspiration it would seem, for he was not even a priest at the time, and had not a single follower save his younger brother Giovan Battista : humanly speaking such an Order seemed a dream of the impossible. In 1721 he set out by command of his Bishop for Rome, still without a follower, to submit his Rule to Innocent XIII., and on the sea voyage from Genoa to Civitavecchia his ship was becalmed for some days off Monte Argentario. He came ashore, and climbing up the rugged mountain to pray in secret, he was suddenly illuminated with the conviction that he was destined by Almighty God to found here and not elsewhere the new Religious Order of his dreams. Here he and his brother Giovan Battista lived some years in a tumble-down hermit's cell, practising every austerity of the flesh, and cultivating every virtue of the spirit. It was not until 1727 that they were ordained priests : it was not until the following year that Paul had collected a few followers, all of whom fell away from him, discouraged by the severity of the life. And it was not until 1737 that the present Retreat was finished, the Saint working at it with his own hands like a common mason. Paolo Danei encountered all the hostility, both of clergy and laity, which was the lot of the legen-



dary founders of Orders. And he had all the virtues, all the sanctity, sweetness, simplicity, patience, and steadfastness of the legendary Saint. He was beatified in 1852, and canonised in 1867. The eighteenth century has produced many holy persons, but as far as I know only three other canonised Saints: St. Leonard of Port Maurice, St. Alphonsus Liguori, and—greatest “Saint” of them all perhaps—the obscure mendicant St. Benedict Joseph Labre, in whose canonisation the Church has exalted the most abject poverty.

“Passionist” is but a popular designation: the full style and title of the Order is: the Congregation of the Discalced Clerks of the Most Holy Cross and Passion of Jesus Christ. They have the essentials of all other Orders, and yet differ from all others to an extent that makes it impossible to classify them. They are neither Monks, nor Friars, nor Clerks Regular, nor a Religious Congregation. Unlike Monks, but like most Friars, they are discalced; unlike both Monks and Friars, they are not tonsured; like Monks and Friars, they say their Office in Choir, and individually may hold no property; unlike Monks and Friars, they take simple and not solemn vows. Clerks Regular and Religious Congregations say their Office in private like secular priests; the former take solemn vows and may hold no property, the latter simple vows, or no vows at all, and may own property in a restricted sense.

Unlike any other Order, besides the usual three vows, the Passionist takes a fourth : to keep alive in the heart of man the Passion of the Lord Jesus Christ. St. Paul of the Cross has not only founded a new Religious Order ; he has instituted a new order of Religious.

The life of the Passionists is very austere. They rise at midnight for Matins ; go barefoot ; fast three days a week and all Advent and Lent ; make a free use of the discipline and the cilicium ; and observe long silences. Their life is divided between action and contemplation ; they go forth into the world to give missions and retreats, to serve in prisons and hospitals, and return home again to prepare themselves in silence for further action. The Passionist habit is of a coarse black stuff, and consists of a tunic (not cassock) taken in at the waist by a black leathern girdle, and a black cloak worn out of doors and on public occasions. In Choir their headgear is the modern biretta ; out of doors the silk hat of a secular priest. But what distinguishes their habit from all others is the Passionist badge affixed to both tunic and mantle. It consists of a large heart cut out in white celluloid on a black ground, surmounted by a white Cross, and bearing in capital letters the words JESU  $\overline{\text{XPI}}$  PASSIO, below which are three nails interlaced, the central nail in pale, the two others in saltire. This badge flashes and shines forth and stands out in quite a remarkable

manner, giving instant distinction to a Passionist, and compelling one to identify him a mile away. The lay brothers are dressed exactly like the Fathers, save that they do not wear the biretta, and bear the badge on the tunic only, not on the cloak. The head of a Passionist house is a Rector, not a Prior, or a Superior, or a Guardian. The house itself is called a Retreat, not a Monastery, or a Convent, or a Friary. The Passionists usually build their Retreats on hills: most Londoners are familiar with the great dome of St. Joseph's Retreat, the Passionist House on Highgate Hill.

Simplicity was one of Paul Danei's chief characteristics, simplicity and the Faith that moves mountains. His simplicity was shown in nothing so much as in his love of the distant, nebulous, heretical realm of Great Britain. He had never set foot outside Italy; I doubt if he had ever spoken to an Englishman; I doubt if reading or study or other definable circumstance had anything to do with it—but certain it is that his mind was full of England, and the desire for her conversion was the great desire of his life. “*Ah! l’Inghilterra, l’Inghilterra! preghiamo per l’Inghilterra!*” was an expression ever on his lips. He could not kneel down to pray without England getting into his thoughts. He remembered England every day in saying Mass; he stirred up others to pray for England. But his action was limited to

prayer : *lasciamo fare a Dio*, he used always to say when his sons spoke to him of the conversion of England.

One day, after having celebrated Mass, he was unusually bright and happy. "Oh, what have I seen this morning!" he said to the Fathers about him; "my Religious in England." And it proved to be no lying vision. The thought of England had almost died out of his Order at the end of the century, but his love for England was revived in one of his spiritual descendants, Father Dominic of the Mother of God (1792-1849), humblest and simplest of men, the son of poor peasants of the Patrimony, who, after unheard-of difficulties and most pathetic struggles with the rebellious English tongue, came among us in 1841, founded a Passionist Retreat at Aston Hall, and by his sanctity and moving simplicity, attracted some of the great minds among the Tractarians, receiving into the Church such men as Newman<sup>1</sup> and Dalgairns, and clothing many more with the habit, as, for instance, George Ignatius Spencer of the noble house of Spencer, a future Provincial of the English

<sup>1</sup> "LITTLEMORE. *October 8th*, 1845.—I am this night expecting Father Dominic, the Passionist, who, from his youth, has been led to have distinct and direct thoughts, first of the countries of the North, then of England. After thirty years' (almost) waiting, he was without his own act sent here. . . . He is a simple holy man; and withal gifted with remarkable powers. He does not know of my intention; but I mean to ask of him admission into the One Fold of Christ."—"Apologia pro Vita Sua" (London, 1873, p. 234).



Passionists. The Congregation has now four Retreats in England, two in Ireland, one in Scotland, and six in the United States: to the Passionists themselves, who are familiarly acquainted with the loving sayings of their simple founder regarding the English, it may be easily imagined how deeply significant and touching is this fact. The Order can, moreover, boast of the latest Servant of God raised to the Altars of the Church. This was a young student of theirs, Gabriele dell' Addolorata, who died so recently as 1862, and has already authoritatively been proclaimed the Venerable. Of his life there is nothing to relate save that it was hid with Christ in God. That is the note of the modern sanctity. The bulk of the Christian world is becoming like the ancient Pagan world, pleasure-loving, unbelieving, frankly sinful; the modern with a high religious aim fears many of those who bear his name as much as the early Christians feared those of the household of Domitian. He has no convenient catacombs in which to hide his saintly aims: Christ is his all-sufficient Catacomb, and hence the very spiritual quality of modern saintliness. I possess the *santino* of the Venerable Gabriel now in use among the Faithful. If it is a fancy picture, it is a *vera effigies*. A veritable Passion Flower he seems with that sweet face and drooping form, and the whole picture eloquently preaches what I have here but faintly

indicated concerning the peculiar characteristics of the modern Saint. Queen Margaret of Italy has a great devotion to the Venerable Gabriel, of whom she possesses some relics.

It is a steep climb to the Retreat on Monte Argentario (1100 ft.), and it is a long hot walk from Orbetello to the base of the mountain. But one can drive to the ascent, and arrange for mules and donkeys to do the rest. On the occasion of my first ascent—a day of premature heat in early June—I noticed that St. Paul had not done for his mountain what St. Patrick did for his island: a number of comfortable, sleepy, repellent—but quite harmless—snakes dragged their slow lengths up the banks and crashed into the underwood at my coming. 'Tis a lovely walk, and ever such an aromatic mountain: drawn forth by the heat of the benignant sun, the sweet and pungent odours of myrtle, rosemary, wild thyme, and wormwood fill the whole air and refresh the jaded senses. But I was not sorry to reach my destination, and ere knocking at the door of the Retreat, I drank deep at the cool fountain which lies over against it. So keen was my thirst, so exquisite the refreshment, that I recalled without any wonder that this must be that very miraculous fountain of which I had read in the modern Legend, sprung from the earth at the prayer of Giovan Battista, the holy founder's holy brother.

The door was opened to me by a lay brother. He started back in delight at the sight of a stranger: "*Passi, passi—venga, venga!*" he cried in a sort of rapture of pleasure, leading the way down the long corridor. I was shown into a bare little reception-room, lined with hard straw-bottomed chairs, its walls covered with a few rude prints and lithographs of Passionist Generals and Servants of God. A charming old Religious presently appeared, followed by the same lay brother bearing a decanter of wine and a caraffe of the miraculous water.

"Welcome!" cried the old man, "welcome to Monte Argentario! Welcome to our modest Retreat! You will rest and eat with us, I hope?"

I am an old hand in the exploration of convents, and had gone up before the dinner-hour in the calm assurance of receiving this invitation. "You are very good, Father," I replied, "I will most willingly rest with you."

"But first you must refresh yourself," he said, with his hand upon the decanter.

"I have already refreshed myself at the spring," said I.

"That was imprudent," he answered with concern. "It is dangerous to drink freely of water when one has made so great a perspiration (*sudata*) as you have."

"But if 'tis miraculous—" I hazarded.

His eyes twinkled with no sort of annoyance or reproof, and immediately it rushed into my mind that I had somewhere read that a man has no firm faith in his religion until he is able to laugh about it.

*"Modico vino utere propter stomachum tuum"* ("Use a little wine for thy stomach's sake"), he rejoined good-naturedly, quoting another Paul much greater than the Paul of Monte Argentario.

I did as I was bid, and then he took me into the church and showed me letters and pictures and relics of the founder; he took me into the library and let me turn over the books; he took me out into the orchard and the woods and showed me different favourite spots where Paul Danei used to pray and meditate and chastise his flesh little more than a hundred years ago. And he took me all the way up to the Novitiate, quite a mile higher up the hill, where I could look down upon the russet town of Orbetello, shot forth upon its tongue of fertile land into the middle of the lake, and the two strange fantastic strips of sandy soil that embraced and circumscribed the vast expanse of smooth still water.

"You are no Italian, sir?" he had asked of me dubiously.

"No, reverend father; I am an Englishman."

Englishman! Inglese! That is always an additional recommendation where a Passionist



is concerned. "I am heartily glad of it!" he exclaimed with fervour and some little admiration.

I begged that I might be allowed to eat with the Community in the Refectory, and I begged that they would make no difference on my account. My first request was granted, but as to the second—well, they laid a table-cover for me while they themselves ate off the bare boards; they gave me a tumbler to drink out of while they used mugs of commonest crockery; I was served with tasty dishes of which they tasted not; and with my dessert of cherries, medlars, raw peas, and strawberries tied up with their leaves in the shape of a nosegay, I was treated to a strong red wine which did not go the round of the long tables. There is strict silence in the Refectory save for the reading aloud; and in the observance of this silence, at least, I was allowed to imitate the Community. In other Refectories where I have eaten, a novice or a father reads aloud from a pulpit, and eats his own meal in peace after the rest have done. Not so with the Passionists. The student at the end of the table begins the reading of a book, and reads until the Father Rector rings a bell, when the book is passed on to the next in order, who will be in the middle of his plate of rice, and so it comes down the long line, interrupting the reader in his meal, nay often at the very moment of a con-

templated mouthful. I remarked upon this afterwards in recreation, and said that it struck me as a much severer penance than with other Orders, where the reader ate at peace and leisure after the reading was over. "Nay, nay—*ma no, ma no*," came the gentle answer, "for the poor wretch (*il poveretto*) probably gets his food cold." So difficult it is to make Italian Religious understand the sublimities of their own life, or how great their sacrifice, or how humiliating to us worldlings their noble example; they themselves, for all their supernatural aims, are the most natural and simple beings in the universe. And yet I have read in the newspapers that they are engaged in a "plot"! The only "plot" of theirs, and all their "machinations," consists in a holy scheme, ancient as the Church itself, to beguile men into those paths of morality which of themselves lead to the supreme and final Good.

I was admitted to their hour's recreation after dinner, and we sat together in the common room, I talking about the Order and plying them with questions about the local traditions, they busily making Rosaries and, in turn, questioning me eagerly about "Inghilterra" and "gl'Inglesi," and the progress that the Faith was making in the former Isle of Saints.

A bell announced that recreation was over and that silence had come again upon the Community

until eventide. I rose to go, and bid an affectionate farewell to my gentle, kindly, generous hosts. They had given me food for the body, and, unwittingly, much food for the mind, as I descended the steep slopes of the mountain side. The Etruscans had been here; the Romans; the Goths and the Vandals; feudal lords of the Empire, too, and Abbots *in commendam*. The Republic of Siena had been here; the Spanish Monarchy; the House of Hapsburg; the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies; the short-lived Kingdom of Etruria; the French Empire; the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. All these had been here; all these had faded away like the baseless fabric of a vision. But the strenuous work of a simple man of God, bent above all things upon alleviating the lot of his fellows, anxious in all things to make plain the mysterious ways of God with the children of men, that remained, that flourished, that was vigorous as when it first began, that would remain, in one form or another, while yet other States, yet other Governments, crumbled into dust by the side of it. For Faith was not dead, nor Sanctity—I had just seen that with my own eyes—and, together, Faith and Sanctity would continue to engender Love which makes possible the Life that is, and Hope which makes paramount the Life to come. Faith and Sanctity, together— But a truce to meditations. I had crossed the long causeway, and was already

in the town. I was a traveller in a hurry to catch the express northwards, and in haste I made ready for the long night journey. But I vowed, then and there, God willing, that it should not be long ere I returned to study History in the old States of the Praesidia, and Religion in the quiet Retreat of the Discalced Clerks of the Most Holy Cross and Passion of the Redeemer.



A TUSCAN GAME:  
PALLONE

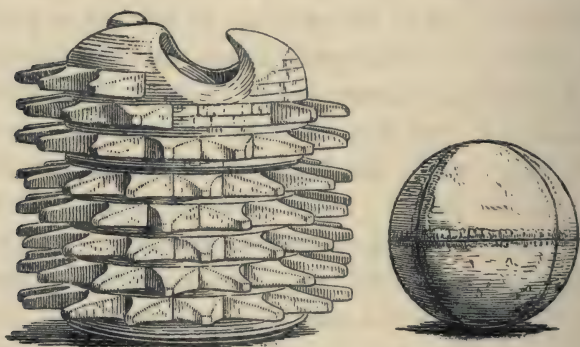


## A TUSCAN GAME : PALLONE

WHAT Englishman, what sport-loving foreigner, is there who, after a brief residence in Italy, does not lose his head over the Italian national game of Pallone? It is as exciting as cricket, a good deal older, ten thousand times more æsthetic, and it takes up but two hours of your time when business for the day is over, instead of three whole days when the business of the day is left to shift for itself. It is strange that Pallone should never have been played before an English public; strange, too, that the English athlete, who knows the ins and outs of base-ball, the niceties of French and Italian fencing, the points of all foreign wrestling, the rules even of the Spanish bull-ring, should never so much as have heard of Pallone. The only parallel to it in nescience is the blank, hopeless, childlike ignorance of the Italian on the subject of cricket. And the Italian is less excusable than the Englishman, for in some of the Italian ports eleven sons of Albion from the ages of fifteen to sixty-five have been known to challenge on Italian soil an eleven of the Royal Navy or the Mercantile

Marine, while Pallone requires a large and specially constructed court which no Italian would lightly think of setting up in Liverpool or London.

But to try and describe the game. Pallone is played upon a mud Court 312 feet long and 53 feet wide, a goodly area, as will be seen. On one side of the Court rises a wooden or stone wall some 50 feet in height. On the other side,



THE BRACCIALE AND BALL

and at either end, stand or sit the excited spectators. The Court is divided in the centre by a line. The players are usually six in number, three on one side and three on the other. And there is also the modest little *mandarino*, the sender or server. One of the three players is *il battitore* (the striker); the second *spalla* (shoulder), who stands, as it were, at the shoulder of the striker and backs him up when the ball is

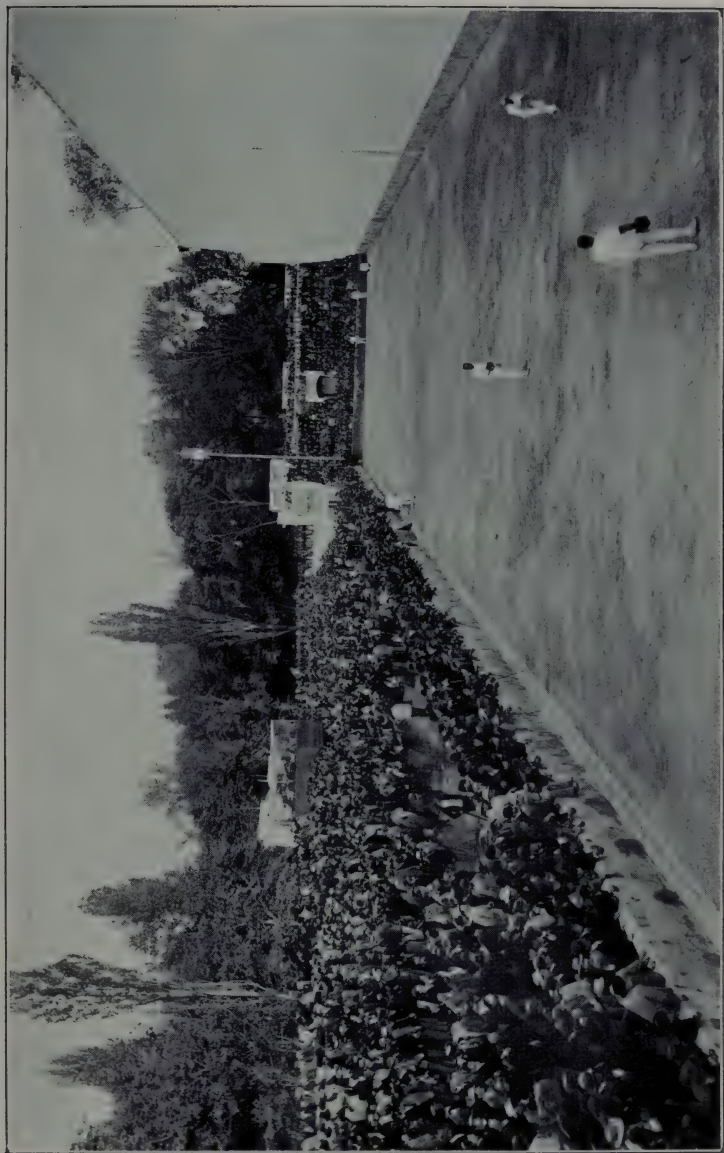


in motion ; and the third is *il terzino*, who plays forward. Each player has on his hand a curious instrument, which, at first sight, looks like nothing so much as a huge pine-cone. This is the *bracciale* with which he strikes the ball. It is made of walnut wood, and studded at regular intervals with wooden spikes, but that part of it which strikes the ball is made of the extremely tough wood of the Cornelian cherry. The centre of it is hollow, and into this the player inserts his hand, which grasps a comfortably-shaped cross-piece at the bottom. The *bracciale* weighs a good  $4\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. avoirdupois. It is about 8 inches in length, and has, owing to the projection of the spikes, a circumference of quite 24 inches. The "drive" which it produces is surprising. The ball is of stout leather, distended by pneumatic pressure ; it weighs 12 ounces, has about 15 inches circumference, and is capable of doing grievous bodily harm.

The set consists of any number of games previously determined upon. Each side receives the service for two consecutive games, which together are styled a *trappolino*. But it is not one side which serves to the other. The *battitore*, or striker-off, stands upon an inclined spring-board at his end of the Court ; the *mandarino*, or server, stands some twenty yards in front of him, and sends him a gentle lob, which the *battitore* receives and strikes as he rushes down, full

tilt, from his point of vantage. The server skips out of the way, or lies down flat if he sets particular store upon his life, and the ball flies whizzing into the opposite Court. Then much the same rules and much the same tactics follow (though on a grandiose scale) as in our Lilliputian lawn-tennis. A point is lost in the same way, and a point is gained in the same way, save that if the ball drops outside or beyond the Court at either end, that counts to the side that sent it, for it needs a real *tour de force* to drive the ball so great a distance. I have seen Gabri, a famous Piedmontese *battitore*, send the ball served to him clean beyond the Court three times in succession, amid yells and bravos of which Tuscan throats alone are capable. But if the ball goes out of the Court, either on the right-hand side of the Court or the left-hand—that is, either among the spectators in the third-class places, or over the high wall opposite them, that counts against the side which sent it. The first point is 15, the second 30, the third 40, the fourth game; there is no deuce or vantage.

But besides the giant and virile proportions of the game, there is another feature wholly unlike the tactics of lawn-tennis. The ball may strike the great wall as often as it chooses without disqualifying the stroke; and sometimes the cunningest and most maddening play is done close up to the wall with the ball creeping insidiously



*Photograph by*

PALLONE COURT AT THE CASCINE, FLORENCE

ZACCARIA, Florence

To face p. 320





along it from Court to Court. Sometimes the forward player, for instance, will strike the ball against the wall, whence it rebounds at an angle at which only the nimblest adversary can hope to take it. In Pallone, all the science of "placing" consists in a right calculation of the force and extent of angles. Most surprising, most tantalising, wildly exciting, are the results of some of this fierce play against the wall.

There is yet another variant of the game. In place of the line drawn across the Court, a narrow strip of net is raised some 10 feet above the ground, and over this the balls have to go. The netting is covered with little bells which ring out tunefully if the ball touches it, for, unlike lawn-tennis, the stroke is against you if you do not completely clear the net. The Italians on the whole prefer this game. It keeps the ball high, allows of long and exciting rallies, and prevents "Whitechapel" (*bruciare*), or the short low stroke which admits of the ball being sent just over the line in a manner in which it can rarely be taken in so huge a Court.

The players are dressed all in white; a loose white frilled jacket, which resembles a garment that may be seen on English clothes-lines, and is, I believe, called a petticoat body; white frilled knee-breeches, white cotton stockings, and white canvas shoes—a far more picturesque and serviceable get-up than our heavier yellowey-white

flannels. Flowing from beneath the jacket hang the two ends of a sash which is either red or blue, for the two sides are always known as the *Rossi* and the *Celesti*, the Reds and the Blues. The *mandarino*, too, is dressed in white, but his jacket is tight-fitting, and his trousers are not knee-breeches. One other figure, he also a white one, stands in the Court by the dividing line, the scorer and umpire, who trills out in a musical sing-song the position of the game after every stroke, *e.g.* *Trenta Celesti e niente Rossi!*—Blues thirty, Reds love! Nor must I forget another important functionary, bronzed and burly as a rule, *il Gonfiatore*, whose business it is to inflate and reinflate the balls during play, and see that the server is served only with such as are sound and in good condition.

The players in a public match are almost always professionals. They are not poorly paid as pay goes in Italy. A good *battitore* will get as much as 500 livres a month, and *terzino* 350. It is true that the professional cricketer would have to renounce sport on such terms, but simplicity and unpretentiousness are still Italian characteristics. Famous among living players are Mazzoni (Tuscan), a squarely-built sturdy athlete, who would certainly be champion if there were a championship; Gabri (Piedmontese), brown, and very handsome, with his twinkling eyes and boyish geniality, whose smile gets more

childlike as his stroke gets more demoniacal; Pettinari of the Marches, a crafty left-handed player, staid and philosophical in his bearing, whose unruffled calm adds to the surprise of his insidious strokes; Beppe Banchini, Franchi, Nidiaci, Silli, Bessi, Moggi, Marini, Tuscans all of them, and all full of renown; and greatest of all, perhaps, both living and dead, Domenico Bossotto of Cuneo, now long past play, but still doing work as Director of the game at Turin.

To the habitual observer the public is almost as diverting as the game itself. At either end of the Court, both dangerous positions, are the second-class places (admission 50 centimes, or 3¼d.). Opposite the great wall, stretching the whole length of the Court, are three terraces—the third-class places—where stand in rapt ecstasy the *popolo* (admission 30 centimes, or 2½d.). There you will recognise your cabman, your barber, the waiter of the restaurant where you lunch, your postman, your butcher's boy and your baker's boy, your boatman and your favourite beggar: all doff their caps to you with a genial grin in commendation of the foreign gentleman who appreciates their national game. Above the second-class places (usually only at one end of the Court), rises the *loggia* of the first-class places (admission one whole livre, or 7½d. at the present rate of exchange) where sit, securely protected by wire-

netting, the *signori*, their mothers, their wives, their nursemaids and small children. Do not keep your face too near the wire protection, or at least keep your eyes open: one of Gabri's "demon" drives will force in the netting a good twelve inches and deprive you of eyesight forever. But fairly secure behind the wire-netting, you may watch and enjoy the discomfiture of the good-natured *popolo* when the ball gets wild and flies among them: there is no time for them to dream of Socialist ideals, or to think of the iniquities of Municipality, or the faithlessness of sweethearts: all their attention is needed to fly before the false stroke that sends a ball whizzing into their midst. Even when the ball flies over their heads and strikes the wall behind them, there is no saying at what angle it will return among them. But a ball which rebounds and knocks off a hat or two, or bruises a pair of sturdy shoulders, is only matter for chaff and hilarity, and the injured, with Tuscan good-humour, are loudest of all in the general delight caused by their discomfiture. Death has resulted from blows received at Pallone, and cases of serious injury (especially to the poor players) are not infrequent. If the statistics of casualties are favourable when compared with football, they are at least evidence sufficient to show that the game has that element of danger required in all true sport. In many parts of Italy, however, the whole of the audience is protected



from the vagaries of the ball, and certainly no Italian *impresario* would dream of setting up Pallone in London without properly sheltering the whole of his British audience.

Great zest is added to the game by innocent and unpretentious betting. One does not wager on the side that will win, but on that man among the six players who shall make the most points. The system adopted is that of the *Totalizzatore*, or "pari mutuel" as it is called in France. All the money collected is divided equally among those who have backed the winning player, less ten per cent. which the *totalizzatore* keeps as his commission. So you have the comfort of knowing, if you lose, that ninety per cent. of your stake does not go into the pockets of a ravening bookie, but may be shared in by your lawyer, your doctor, your water-carrier, and your favourite beggar. Supposing 700 one-franc tickets to have been wagered on a set, distributed as follows:—

Blue Battitore, 150, less 10 per cent.	.	135 francs.
„ Spalla, 110	„	99 „
„ Terzino, 90	„	81 „
Red Battitore, 130	„	117 „
„ Spalla, 100	„	90 „
„ Terzino, 120	„	108 „
<hr/> 700	„	<hr/> 630 „

And supposing Blue *Terzino* makes the greatest number of points, then there remain 630 francs to be equally divided among the ninety people

who have backed him, and each receives seven francs. The system is simplicity and fairness itself, and is not without its charms. Of course any one person may take as many tickets on the same player as he chooses.

A careful note is kept of the points made by each individual player, and they are publicly scored as the game proceeds. Look at this representation of the scoring-board. It is divided into two parts, the left half facing you is red, the other half, blue. Of the four figures on the extreme outside, the upper two indicate the number of services received by each side—Reds one, Blues two—(remember that each service consists of two games), the lower and bigger figures that the Reds have won two games, and the Blues three. Of the remaining twelve figures, the upper line with the larger figures shows the number of points made by *Battitore*, *Spalla*, and *Terzino* of either colour respectively, the lower line or smaller figures indicating the number of faults or failures each player has made, for if two players should leave off equal in points, then the winner of the two is he who has the fewest faults against his name. This wagering on individuals who really form part of two opposing sides is perhaps a trifle unsportsmanlike, but it extends the possibilities of the betting, works well, and somewhat softens the asperities of excessive party feeling.

A very charming game, then, is this Italian



THE SCORING-BOARD





national game of Pallone. Into its history and antiquity I forbear to go. The origin of the game is lost in obscurity; the hackneyed phrase, as it happens, literally tells the truth about it, and does not serve as an excuse for shirking research. One must read Greek and Latin to study the origin and first beginnings of the game. Quite a recent treatise on it is that of Messer Antonio Scaino, printed at Venice in 1560; the last notable book on the subject is "*Gli Azzurri e i Rossi*" (Turin, 1897), by a novelist famous here, and well known in England, Edmondo de Amicis. Nor can I now spare space to sing the prowess of past worthies. But one of them I must at least just mention, for I have been fortunate enough to secure a very striking portrait of him, a delicate line engraving, which brings out clearly all the frills and furbelows of the costume sixty years ago. This is Angelo Donati, whom very old Tuscan gentlemen can still remember, and still speak of with bated breath. He as *Battitore*, his brother as *Spalla*, and his son as *Terzino* made up the most formidable trio the game has ever witnessed. Angelo, from his demon stroke, was known as *il Diavolone* or the very devil, his brother as *il Diavoletto* or the devil of a fellow, and his son as *il Diavolino* or the little devil. Those were the palmy days of the game, when athletes were of more account than patriots and politicians.

Pallone has a fine flavour of antiquity about its appearance and *mise en scène*. The bronzed muscular players with their slight white picturesque costumes, the dense excited crowd, half-squatting, half-sitting, half-standing, the brilliant sun, the blue sky, the huge arena, recall without any effort of the imagination a Roman amphitheatre. The game (alas!) is on the decline. Time was when Royalty, on its visits to a favoured city, was always entertained with a gala game of Pallone, and authentic history has it that in the year 1814 King Ferdinand of the Two Sicilies and British Vice-Consul Thomas Watson played a set on opposite sides in the great piazza of Livorno. But Royalty has heavier duties nowadays, and the burden of civilisation leaves the people little time and less money for innocent pastimes.

The English traveller in Italy would do well to leave for a while churches and picture-galleries and seek out a Pallone Court. He will not be disappointed, and will certainly come again. And I think I have a piece of good news for all English lovers of athletic sports. I know that with a little encouragement more than one *impresario* would be ready to set up a Pallone Court in London, and provide London audiences with the best of living players. Our Italian brother athletes would be heartily welcome, and may rest assured of that loyal and vigorous sup-

port which Englishmen as a nation are ever ready to accord to all forms of manly and healthy exercise.

*Post scriptum.*—It is to be hoped that a Pallone Court is not a “place” within the meaning of the Act, and that the harmless necessary *totalizzatore* will be allowed to discharge his functions unmolested.





TUSCAN GAMBLING:  
THE STATE LOTTERY



## TUSCAN GAMBLING: THE STATE LOTTERY

AT four o'clock of every Saturday afternoon a sight may be seen in eight important Italian cities, which has no counterpart in any of the cities of England. This is the public drawing of the Regio Lotto, or State Lottery. The Lotto plays an important part in Italy. It is important to the State, which derives a net revenue of never less than £1,000,000 sterling from it, and it is important to a people born gamblers, as are all imaginative races, who, with this safety-valve of mild authorised gambling always at hand, are, on the whole, restrained from worse excesses.

The Regio Lotto, though simple in itself, is not easy of explanation, nor are the dry bones of its system susceptible of literary vivification. Let our glance at the system, therefore, be very brief. In eight cities—to wit, Bari in Apulia, Florence, Milan, Naples, Palermo, Rome, Turin, and Venice, five numbers are drawn out of the numbers 1 to 90 inclusive, at four o'clock of every Saturday. The drawing is done in this

wise, leastways at Florence, where I saw it. A commission, consisting of the Prefect of the Province, the Mayor of the city (or more usually their duly authorised representatives), and the local Director of the Lotto, take their places in a large open *loggia* fronting a piazza accessible to the public. There the numbers are publicly placed, one by one, in a revolving wire-receptacle, shaped like a huge pumpkin. The numbers are mounted on cloth, divided so as to fold into a small space. Each number is first held up to the crowd below by an attendant, it is then folded by the Director of the Lotto and handed to the Prefect's representative, who places it in a hollow metal ball which shuts with a spring. He hands each ball to a boy who places it in the pumpkin-shaped receptacle. This boy is the instrument chosen by Dame Fortune to draw the numbers, and he is an object of veneration with the crowd. He comes from some orphanage, and is a new boy every week. He is dressed in white to symbolise his own innocence and the guilelessness of the proceedings in which he is engaged. The law allots him a fee of twenty lire for his services, but that, of course, goes to his orphanage. After each series of ten numbers has been placed in the wire-receptacle, it is locked and revolved several times so as to mix up the numbers thoroughly.

When the whole ninety numbers have been



put in, the orphan boy is blindfolded, his sleeve is rolled up, he dives his arm into the slender aperture of the receptacle, and produces one of the metal balls. This is solemnly opened by the Prefect or his representative, the number is called out and held up to the crowd, and is then posted up at the back of the *loggia* after the manner of figures on a scoring-board. The remaining four numbers are drawn in the same way, and posted up in the order in which they are drawn. Then the small crowd melts away, usually with a look of disappointment on all faces, the Prefect's and the Mayor's representative receive the fee of twenty lire accorded them by law, the orphan boy is paid for the benefit of his orphanage, and the Director bustles off to telegraph the result of his drawing to the seven other drawing centres. By eight in the evening all Italy knows through the evening papers how it stands in the eight extractions. To prevent any possibility of mistake each number is repeated three times in the telegram, first in figures, then in writing, and then by code-word; thus: 79, seventy-nine, Siena (code-word for seventy-nine). If the three do not perfectly agree the receiving office requests the message to be repeated. On Saturday after five the printing-presses of the eight drawing centres are busy printing the results of the eight drawings which they have learned by telegram, and by Sunday morning all the Lotto

offices in the kingdom are placarded with printed notices of the results. The following, as a specimen, was the drawing for Saturday the 18th November 1899 :—

Bari . . .	12	42	73	53	67
Florence . .	69	80	82	63	33
Milan . . .	54	78	43	3	64
Naples . . .	79	68	23	55	65
Palermo . .	74	32	90	3	7
Rome . . .	39	19	51	38	89
Turin . . .	14	89	88	37	55
Venice . . .	43	87	81	49	89

And now as to the manner of winning—and losing. In every Italian town of importance there are a number of Lotto offices, where during the week a brisk business is done in the sale of tickets for the Saturday's drawing. The game may be played in a variety of complicated forms. We will only consider a few of the simpler. As has been said, five numbers out of numbers 1 to 90 are drawn. If any of the numbers selected by the player appear among the five the amounts paid are as follows : if it has been wagered (as it were) that one particular number will be among the five and it appears, the amount paid is  $10\frac{1}{2}$  times the stake (*estratto semplice*); if that a certain number will occupy a definite position in the drawing, *e.g.* that 89 will come out second of the five (*estratto determinato*), the amount paid is  $52\frac{1}{2}$  times the stake ; if that any two numbers will be among the five (*ambo*), 250 times the stake ; if

that three numbers will be among the five (*terno*), 4250 times the stake ; if that four numbers (*quaterno*), 60,000 times the stake. The *ambo* is the favourite game. About 54 per cent. of the play is on the *ambo*, 40 per cent. on the *terno*, only 4 per cent. on the *quaterno* (a very off chance indeed), about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on the *estratto determinato*, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on the *estratto semplice*, the winnings on the two latter not being sufficiently tempting.

The system, however, at once becomes more complicated when the above-described straightforward play (*giuoco secco*) is abandoned. For instance, three numbers are selected by the player, 23, 47, 69 ; he takes a ticket for three lire distributed as follows : one lira on the *ambo* or that two out of the *three* numbers will be among the five, and two lire on the *terno* or that all three will turn up. He no longer receives 250 times the stake if he wins the *ambo*, because he is using three numbers instead of two, and his chances are three times as great, for there are three combinations of two in three numbers. He will only be paid 83.33 times his stake. And supposing all three numbers to have been drawn, he would receive not only 4250 times his stake for the *terno secco*, but also three times the *ambo* for the three combinations of two. In the above case where three lire have been staked, the winnings would be lire 8500 on the *terno*,

and lire 249.99 on the *ambo*, a total of say lire 8750.

To take another and still more complicated example. A player puts three lire on five numbers, say 8, 27, 44, 89, 90, placing one lira on *ambo*, one on *terno*, and one on *quaterno*. If two numbers come out he receives only one-tenth of lire 250, for there are ten combinations of two in five numbers. If three numbers come out he only receives one-tenth of lire 4250, for there are also ten combinations of three in five numbers. If four numbers come out he only receives one-fifth of lire 60,000, for there are five combinations of four in five numbers. Now, supposing four of the above numbers to have been drawn, the winnings would be as follows :—

<i>Quaterno</i> = One-fifth of lire 60,000,	lire 12,000
4 times the <i>terno</i> of lire 425 for the four combinations of 3 in four numbers . . . . .	„ 1,700
times the <i>ambo</i> of lire 25 for the six combinations of 2 in four numbers . . . . .	„ 150
Total winnings . . . . .	lire 13,850

Theoretically a player may put on as many numbers as he likes, but the more numbers he plays the less are his winnings, as will be seen from the above example. If he were to put a lira on 12 numbers, his winnings would only be: on the *ambo* lire 3.79, on the *terno* lire 19.32, on the



*quaterno* lire 121.21. When we reach thirty numbers there is a positive loss on the *ambo*, and the winnings on the *terno* have dwindled down to a solitary soldo on every lira. People seldom go beyond twelve numbers, and by far the more usual game is to play three, dividing the stakes between *ambo* and *terno*.

The Regio Lotto in its relations with the people is not worked directly by the State. The Lotto offices are farmed out to private individuals known as *Ricevitori*. There are about 1700 *Ricevitori* in the kingdom. The *Ricevitore* provides his own office (*Banco di Lotto*) and his own staff of clerks, and retains a percentage of his takings calculated on a sliding-scale which allows him 10½ per cent., if his weekly takings have not exceeded lire 200, and 3½ per cent. on takings of lire 5800 and upwards. Midway in the scale is 7 per cent. on lire 1200. The *Ricevitore* is provided with Register Books of tickets by the Government. The tickets are ten in number, of the values of 12c., 16c., 20c., 30c., 50c., lire 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, and 100.<sup>1</sup> At the cessation of play, which in most towns takes place on Friday night, the *Ricevitore* has to send the counterfoils of the tickets issued to the head office of the district (*compartimento*) in which his

<sup>1</sup> A *Ricevitore* may not issue a ticket on the same numbers if the result in case of winning should exceed lire 400,000. Thus he could not issue a 100 lire ticket on *quaterno secco*. For the winnings would amount to lire 600,000.

office is situated. Thus Syracuse would send to Palermo, Barletta to Bari, Caserta to Naples, Lucca to Florence, &c. If for any reason, say by reason of a railway accident or a faulty postal delivery, the counterfoils have not reached the head office in time to be deposited in the safes before the drawing, all winnings on such tickets are cancelled, and the value of the tickets is returned to the players. Of course such an event rarely occurs, but I have known it happen more than once, when rough weather has prevented the Elba packet from sailing for the mainland. There is much soreness of heart when winning numbers are among those thus cancelled, but the only certain loser is the *Ricevitore*, who finds himself minus a week's commission on takings. At the eight head-centres play is continued in the Lotto offices until two o'clock on Saturday afternoon, when the counterfoils are surrendered to the local Director. Arrangements have been made in some of the larger towns (*e.g.* Ancona, Bologna, Leghorn) for an "Archivio" under the control of the local Intendant of Finances. Here counterfoils can be deposited as at the head offices, and play continued till two in the afternoon of Saturday. These extra hours make the greatest possible difference to the takings. For instance the Bologna *Archivio* was only started at the beginning of the financial year for 1898. In the previous year the takings at Bologna were lire 1,711,965,

in 1898 lire 1,914,673, showing a gross increase in receipts of over lire 202,000, caused solely by the Lotto offices of the town being open about 300 hours longer in the course of the year.

Seeing that the *Ricevitore* has surrendered his counterfoils at a certain hour, it might be thought that play would then cease altogether. But such is not the case. The Italian imagination is sufficiently fertile, and it has hit upon a plan of continuing play up to the hour of drawing and even somewhat beyond it. The *Ricevitore*, before parting with his Registers, takes a number of tickets *at his own risk*, filling them up with numbers of his own choice. These he continues to sell after the hour that play has officially ceased, and such tickets, which are known as "storni," enjoy great popularity. It is seldom that a *Ricevitore* has any *storni* left on his hands by the time the news of the drawing reaches a city. If he has, the loss is his own; or the gain, should he be fortunate enough to hold any *storni* with winning numbers. I once heard of a *Ricevitore* who was grumbling that his *storni* were going off very badly that day; the tickets left on his hands brought him in over £1000 in winnings.

The odds are very heavily against winning in the Regio Lotto. There are 4005 combinations of 2 in 90 numbers, 117,480 combinations of 3, and no less than 2,555,190 combinations of 4,

and yet with these heavy odds against the player, only 250 times the stake is returned for *ambo*, 4250 for the *terno*, and 60,000 for the *quaterno*. To show how slender are the chances of winning, it is sufficient to reflect that it is just as likely that Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 should be the five numbers drawn, as any other series of five. Yet how seldom do we see even three consecutive numbers in the same extraction. In the year 1897 there were 53 drawings at the eight *Ruote*, and therefore 424 extractions altogether ( $8 \times 53$ ), yet in all, put together, three consecutive numbers only appeared four times. On the other hand, two consecutive numbers are of singular frequency, no less than 71 cases having occurred in 1897. Fortune does indeed play strange freaks with the numbers. An analysis which I have made of some of the drawings of 1897, shows that at Florence the numbers 10, 16, 47, were not drawn once, that 14 numbers were drawn only once, 24 numbers twice, 19 three times, 12 four times, 10 five times, 8 six times, and not one seven times. At Rome in the same period every number had its turn, 14 numbers being drawn only once, 21 twice, 25 three times, 19 four times, 8 five times, and 3 six times. It should be borne in mind that in 53 drawings only 265 ( $53 \times 5$ ) numbers are drawn at each centre, leaving barely three turns to each if all the ninety numbers were to have a turn. At Naples the number 79 was



once  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years without showing itself. The present writer has, as a matter of curiosity, looked out each week for the numbers 47, 56, 89, for the last four years. They have never appeared at any of the eight *Ruote* as a *terno*, and only twice as an *ambo*. Nay, an Italian acquaintance of his declares that he has made a similar experiment with three numbers for the last thirty years, and that *no two of them* even have turned up together in that long period.

But that people do win, and a great many people too, may be seen from the following authentic Table, which has the further merit of showing the amount played and won upon the five different kinds of play :—

YEAR 1899.

	Takings.	Winnings.	Profits.
	Lire.	Lire.	Lire.
Estratto Semplice . .	250,043	128,186	121,857
Estratto Determinato .	1,009,400	613,821	395,579
Ambo . . . .	37,482,159	24,133,352	13,348,807
Terno . . . .	28,439,944	12,043,187	16,396,757
Quaterno . . . .	2,964,665	468,895	2,495,771
Total	70,146,211	37,387,441	32,758,771

The above statistics show that the State cleared 49 per cent. on the *Estratto Semplice*, 39 per cent. on the *Estratto Determinato*, 36 per cent. on the *Ambo*, 58 per cent. on the *Terno*, and as much as 84 per cent. on the *Quaterno*, which

so rarely turns up—altogether 47 per cent. of the takings.<sup>1</sup>

The Regio Lotto costs the State some £235,000 per annum apart from the winnings. There is the commission of the *Ricevitori*, the salaries of the Directors and employés at the head offices, the printing of the ticket registers, &c. The net result of the year 1899 was as follows:—

	<i>Lire.</i>
Takings . . . . .	70,146,211
Winnings . . . . .	37,387,441
Commission of the	
<i>Ricevitori</i> . . . . .	5,456,186
Salaries . . . . .	562,218
Printing . . . . .	149,530
Various Expenses . . . . .	155,705
	<hr/> 43,711,080 <hr/>
Net result to the State for the year	
1899 . . . . .	Lire 26,435,131

Gambling in the Regio Lotto shows little sign of decreasing.<sup>2</sup> In 1861, the first year of the new

<sup>1</sup> The Italian financial year begins on the 1st July and ends on the 30th June. The above figures refer to the financial year.

The official estimate of gross profits based on many years' experience is: *Estratto Semplice* 41.67 per cent., *Estratto Determinato* 41.67 per cent., *Ambo* 37.58 per cent., *Terno* 63.82 per cent., *Quaterno* 88.26 per cent.,—altogether 54 per cent. on the takings. The percentage in 1896 was 52 per cent., in 1897 51 per cent., in 1898 54 per cent., the average of the five years 1893–1897 being 52 per cent., all which shows on how sound a basis the official estimate is calculated.

<sup>2</sup> In 1899 the enormous number of 240,473,410 tickets were taken in the Lotto, of which 2,260,518 were winning tickets.

United Kingdom, with Venice and the Patrimony of St. Peter still unannexed, and the population about 21,521,560, the gross takings were only 28,308,380 lire, showing a contribution of lire 1.32 per head of the population. In 1899, with the population at 30,901,852,<sup>1</sup> the takings, as has been said, were lire 70,146,211, or lire 2.27 per head of the population. The highest year ever known was 1869 when receipts reached a total of lire 80,791,928. It was also the worst known year for the State, the winnings being lire 61,314,438. The Statistics of the results of the Lotto are an interesting study, and a few of the years since 1861 have been selected for comparison in the following Table:—

Year.	Takings.	Winnings.	Gross Profits.	Number of Tickets.	Population.	Takings per head of population.
	Lire.	Lire.	Lire.			Lire.
1862	35,249,204	15,420,200	19,829,003	—	21,495,326	1.64
1867	44,318,866	23,844,345	20,474,520	—	24,658,772 <sup>2</sup>	1.80
1871	66,521,718	32,890,697	33,631,020	136,783,095	26,164,494 <sup>3</sup>	2.54
1875	73,544,715	37,178,774	36,365,940	218,334,010	26,827,742	2.74
1883	71,831,555	38,744,301	33,087,254	236,406,326	28,311,081	2.54
1889	75,016,968	38,399,012	36,617,956	233,836,071	29,835,576	2.52
1891	64,751,437	29,643,515	35,107,922	211,733,878	29,953,611	2.16
1895	64,794,813	33,576,948	31,217,865	223,489,723	29,963,611	2.16
1896	63,911,397	30,837,573	33,073,823	221,389,969	30,351,578	2.11
1897	65,753,223	32,389,549	33,363,675	227,528,335	30,533,860	2.15
1898	66,117,958	30,623,671	35,494,287	228,343,969	30,718,069	2.15

<sup>1</sup> Excluding Sardinia.

<sup>2</sup> Venice was added to the kingdom in 1866.

<sup>3</sup> Rome and the patrimony of St. Peter annexed in 1870.

As has been indicated, Italy is divided into eight districts called *compartimenti*, for the purposes of the Lotto. Not that this prevents a person living in one *compartimento* from playing on the drawing in another. A *Ricevitore* in any town can issue tickets for any of the extractions. Indeed, a favourite game is to increase the chances eightfold by playing the same numbers on all the eight extractions (*tutte le Ruote*). One lira placed on three numbers *secco* on all the eight drawings would fetch, if they turned up at one place, lire 531.25, and one lira on the *ambo secco*, lire 31.25. The *compartimento* of Naples is *facile princeps* in the amount it contributes to the State coffers through the Lotto, as the following figures show:—

<i>Compartimento.</i>	<i>Takings in 1898. Lire.</i>	<i>Population of Compartimento.</i>
Naples . . .	18,244,375	3,854,530
Turin . . .	9,411,145	4,855,023
Palermo . . .	9,106,549	4,207,330
Florence . . .	6,818,836	3,743,892
Rome . . .	6,665,402	3,407,743
Milan . . .	5,545,907	3,767,721
Bari . . .	5,222,253	3,190,687
Venice . . .	5,103,496	3,691,143

The devotion to the Lotto in the South is intense. The strictly meridional *compartimenti* of Bari, Palermo, and Naples contribute nearly one-half of the takings from the Lotto, and if the quasi-meridional *compartimento* of Rome be added



to their number, South is 6,000,000 lire ahead of North. Looking at the receipts from the point of view of the modern *provinces*, the province of Naples contributes lire 11.09 a head per annum, the province of Leghorn is a bad second with lire 7.80, and the province of Rome a poor third with lire 4.98. Of other important provinces Venice is fourth with lire 4.71, Palermo fifth with lire 4.39, Genoa sixth with lire 4.17, Florence tenth with lire 2.96, Milan twelfth with lire 2.78, Turin fourteenth with lire 2.52, Bologna twentieth with lire 1.59, Lucca twenty-seventh with lire 1.25, Siena thirty-fourth with lire 1.07, Perugia fifty-seventh with 65c., and the little province of Sondrio sixty-seventh and last with 19c. Note that Sardinia (composed of two provinces) possesses no Lotto offices. There is no great liking for the Lotto in the island; besides, the distance at which it is situated from the mainland would considerably shorten the time of play, owing to the regulation requiring all counterfoils to be deposited at a head office before the drawing. The Sardinians who play do their business by correspondence, chiefly with the *Ricevitori* of Leghorn. A certain amount of business with foreign countries also seems to be done, and I know of *Ricevitori* who have even English correspondents.

Who that has lived any length of time in Italy can resist play? It is in the atmosphere. The stranger seems out of harmony with his surround-

ings unless he indulges in a little play himself, and takes a proper interest in his neighbour's play. The present writer is fain to confess that after some years of churlish resistance he ended by capitulating, and has seldom missed a week since the spring of 1896 without putting a trifle on the Lotto. During that time he has won lire 440 divided among four *ambi*, and is thought to have had exceptional good fortune. The process of choosing three numbers is full of interest and excitement, and leads to the retailing of many a thrilling anecdote and the recounting of much domestic detail. We are none of us so cold-blooded as calmly to choose any the first three numbers of the ninety that occur to us, nor are many of us sufficiently scientific to care a jot about the theory of probabilities. No; we play on dreams and events. For every single thing of any importance in this world has its number, and what that number is may be learned, with a variety of other interesting cabalistic matter, from one of the many dream-books which enjoy so extensive a circulation in the peninsula. "Il Vero Libro dei Sogni" is a great favourite in Tuscany.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> IL VERO LIBRO DEI SOGNI ossia L'ECO DELLA FORTUNA, nuova edizione composta sul sistema Rutiliano, contenente: Sessanta mila Voci poste per ordine alfabetico e relative a Persone, Animali, Piante, Frutti, Fiori, Arti, Milizia, e Città. Accresciuta delle vere Tavole Rutiliane, della Chiave d'Oro, dei Numeri simpatici, delle Cabale della Sibilla e di altre utilissime ai Giocatori. (Florence, A. Salani, 1897, 8vo, pp. 672.)

The lower classes—and especially the servant class—play on dreams rather than events. The cook dreams that she was chased over a bridge by a bear. In the morning she, after consultation with many friends in the market-place, decides that the three salient features of her dream were the bridge, the bear, and her own abject terror. The poulterer say, for she probably does not read, turns up the *Libro de' Sogni* for her, in the presence of an interested audience. Bridge is found to be 6, bear 55, and her own abject terror 90. Here are three numbers clear enough, but we are only at the beginning of the discussion. Bear is 55, but white bear is 1, black bear 18, a dancing bear 6, an infuriated bear 18. The cook thinks the bear of her dream was *brown*, but that he may have had some black and some white about him, also that he may have been dancing when she came up with him, and that he did not seem very infuriated. Excitement among the knot of onlookers grows apace. "If you play 55 and 18 comes out you will be sorry for it, my dear," says the poulterer in warning tones. Then bridge pure and simple is 6, but iron bridge is 16, wooden bridge is 46, draw-bridge is 80, railway-bridge is 7. Drawbridge and railway-bridge are dismissed, but as the cook thinks the bridge of her dream was built partly of iron and partly of wood, with some stonework about it, the loud-voiced quarrelling stage is soon

reached by her excited friends. The only point that admits of no dispute is go for her own abject terror.

This little example is sufficient to show that the due selection of three numbers is no common matter, but needs much anxious deliberation. In the writer's dream-book there are, besides dog pure and simple, thirty-six kinds of dog to dream about: mad dogs, biting dogs, spotted dogs, lost dogs, and so forth. Besides cat, horse, ass, man, woman, pure and simple, there are twenty-eight kinds of cat, thirty-nine kinds of horse, sixteen kinds of ass, twenty-three kinds of man, and (Heaven help us!) one hundred and thirty-seven kinds of woman! So large a part does woman play in our dreams in Tuscany! Pretty well every eventuality is provided for, from a dream about a woman at her toilet-table, to a dream about two women who are scratching each other's faces. It is always difficult to remember the connotations of a dream figure, and doubly so when extreme precision is required of us. The only absolutely certain method in the popular estimation (ah! how it is prayed for!) is to dream of three numbers, either that some one uttered them, or, better still, that they were written up on a wall. A policeman in Sicily not long ago woke up his wife in the night, telling her he had dreamed of four numbers, and asking her to help him to remember them in the morning. He



played his four numbers, and won a sum that enabled him to retire from the force. The story went the round of the Italian papers lately, and I believe it to be true.

As with dreams so also with events: three numbers are not arrived at without much searching of heart, and still more talk. King Umberto and Queen Margherita come to Turin to unveil a statue to Victor Emmanuel. There is 79 for King, 73 for Queen, 60 for Umberto, 20 for Margherita, 23 for Vittorio, 45 for Emanuele, 19 for Torino, 55 for statue, 8 for the day of the month. Which are the three salient numbers here? And what agony if any of the rejected numbers should come out, bringing with them wealth long dreamt of!

At Jubilee time in June 1897, English residents in Italy affected the Queen's numbers. The drawing at Florence for Saturday 19th June in that year was 33, 18, 73, 60, 77. One Englishman played Victoria (60), Queen (73), and Empress (41), and won two hundred lire on the *ambo*. It is somewhat of a curious coincidence that 60 should stand for Victoria and for Throne, and should also have been the number of years the Queen had been on the Throne. Eighteen, the age at which she came to the Throne (60) is another Royal number, and 77 was but one point removed from her age in 1897.

It would be easily possible to fill a volume with stories about the Regio Lotto: this chapter, however, has no other scope than a brief explanation of its system and working. But two more stories—they are so thoroughly Italian, too—and I have done. A certain Government official was imprisoned and arraigned for an embezzlement of 10,000 lire of the public funds. Before the Examining Magistrate he did not reveal the trump card which he thought would secure his acquittal. But in open court his advocate triumphantly produced 10,000 lire worth of unsuccessful Lotto tickets. "See!" he cried, "if my client has taken from the State with one hand, he has restored to it with the other every centesimo which he is accused of having misappropriated!" The ingenious plea did not, however, avail to save the culprit from a term of imprisonment.

My second story is even better, and will serve to show how thoroughly every class of society is permeated by the notion of the Lotto. On the 2nd April 1900, Zanardelli, in an eloquent speech in the Chamber of Deputies, quoted with some emphasis Articles 3, 6, and 82 of the fundamental constitution of the realm. A derisive voice from the "Centre" shouted "three good numbers for the Lotto!" and the idea at once caught on. All the Deputies played these numbers, and the story having got abroad, the populace of Rome followed their example. It is said that altogether 40,000

lire were played that week on these three numbers. Not one of them came out, and the wags of the Chamber were saying the next day that the Minister of Finance was wanting in manners and gratitude for not having sent his card to Zanardelli to thank him for this precious addition to the Exchequer!

NOTE.—Most of the figures in this chapter have been taken from the “*Relazione*” of the Director-General of the Lotto, a very model of an official compilation. I have also to express my acknowledgments to the Cavaliere E. Tempesti, Director of the Florence *Compartimento*, who courteously afforded me every facility in seeing the drawing of the Lotto and in obtaining information.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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